T/SOR/49/1/6

FREE NO. 35

COUNTER INFORMATION

NOV/DEC/JAN 1992/3

FIGHTING THE FORTRESS

AS THE European Community furthers its attempts to create a 'Fortress Europe', and racist and fascist violence Europe-wide is on the increase, so the fightback continues.

BRITAIN

1 August - 25000 people attend Anti-Racist Alliance festival in South London.

15 August - 2000 people demonstrate their support of '500 years of Resistance' in Liverpool.

The same day - the BNP's biggest planned meeting of the summer is reduced to a tiny fifteen-minute rally just outside Halifax. Despite police 'warnings' to members of the black community that it might not be safe to go into their own town, 700 anti-fascists prove that neither fascists nor the police can intimidate them.

21 August - Faced with a Tory proposal to bring in legislation forcing Gypsies and other travellers to settle in houses, Tommy Lee of the Romany Guild promises, "They'll never get this to work...There are 13000 gypsies with vehicles, who can block the streets of the City of London."

22 August - 3000 people bring Manchester city centre to a halt demonstrating their sadness at the deaths of Mohammed Sarwar and Siddik Dada, murdered in January, and anger at increasing racist attacks in the area.

31 August - the black community in Elswick, Newcastle organise a strong demonstration of 500 local people to show their anger at the fatal attack on Mr. Miah outside a mosque on 24 August.

12 September - fascists from Britain and Europe get a taste of working class justice when they meet with massive anti-fascist opposition at Waterloo station, advertised as the redirection point to a gig by the Nazi band Screwdriver. Of the 2000 bopping Nazis expected, only 500 make it to the gig in Eltham, a number find themselves in hospital, and a car displaying a BNP poster is completely written off.

- Among others, William Weekes and Mamta Chopra, with large community support, continue to fight racist immigration laws being utilised in attempts to deport them.

GERMANY

13 June - 2500 people attend solidarity demonstration for refugees attacked at a refugee camp in Mannheim, four days after a similar, 400-strong demonstration was brutally terminated by massive police action.

- *Kreuzberg, Berlin.* Vietnamese people, forced to live in a house for asylum-seekers, drive off fascists attempting to attack them.

29 August - Rostock sees 20000 anti-fascists take to the streets in response to the large-scale attacks on refugees and immigrants—basically amounting to Nazi riots—over the previous week. Solidarity demonstrations in other German cities, despite police attempts to restrict the movements of anti-fascists. Meanwhile racist attacks on refugee hostels continue at a rate of up to 20 a day.

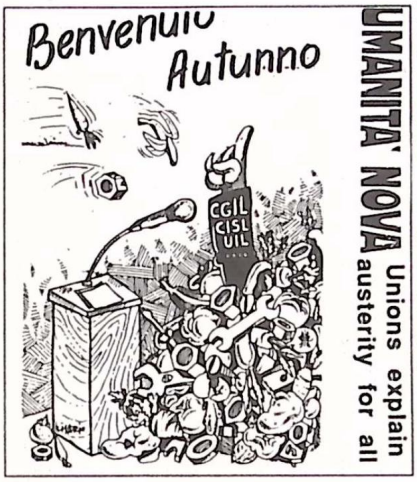
Italy in Ferment

Strikes are sweeping Italy. Workers' grass roots committtees (COBAS) are rejecting the sell-out of the official trade unions. An activist in the Centre of Anarchist Documentation in Padova sends this first hand report :

"THE ECONOMIC measures approved for 1993 by the Amato government cut public spending by around 93,000 thousand million lira.

Thousands of workers, pensioners, unemployed, young people and students have strongly protested against the economic manoeuvres of the government. Manoeuvres which immediately followed the financial whirlwind in Europe, the devaluation of the lira, and the recognition that Germany and market forces are the driving force of European unification .

The government is freezing recruitment in the public sector, stopping any new wage negotiations, ending assistance with health care for 2/3 of families, imposing a new tax on houses, and - through the July agreement with the Unions - abolishing the scala mobile (automatic wage increases linked to inflation).



But perhaps the most important aspect of the response to these measures has been the generalised opposition to the trade union leaders and their political line from the workers and citizens in the streets of every Italian city.

BOMBARDMENTS

22 September, Florence : 100,000 demonstrate as a regional strike hits Tuscany. Thousands of workers, chanting GENERAL STRIKE, bombard the CGIL union leader Bruno Trentin with volleys of eggs, potatoes, tomatoes, bolts, etc., forcing him to quickly close his speech.

23 September, Milan : 100,000 strike and demonstrate. A UIL union leader, protected by sheets of transparent plastic, tries to speak : but the "street" hurls eggs, bolts and other objects, forcing him rapidly to flight. The self-organised workers, including the Committe of struggle of Breda Fucine, COBAS Ansaldo di Sesto S. Giovanni, COBAS Alfa Romeo, and the Federation of United Metal Mechanic Workers, hold an alternative rally.

25 September, Turin : 80,000 people on the streets, but above all the strike succeeds at Mirafiori-Fiat. The CGIL union secretary, covered by plastic sheets, leads off a rally which is clamorously booed and the target of a nutritious bombardment of vegetables. The union leaders flee.

Numerous other demos included Naples (80,000), then Bologna, Bari, Genova, Parma, Padova, Venezia, Taranto, Brescia, Bergamo : everywhere the trade unions were challenged, and what's more now there really is a consciousness of an alternative organisation of the workers. Especially militant were the public sector workers.

The demand from the workers is

- a country-wide general strike !"

2 October : A national public sector strike with 3 million participants, a general strike in Lazio and dramatic street clashes in Rome as 150,000 - 200,000 demonstrate. The police make unprovoked attacks on school students. Missiles soar towards the Union leaders' platform. The police, aided by the union stewards, violently charge. Over 60 injured and over 100 arrested. Later COBAS and other self-organised workers hold their own march and rally.

In a bid to reassert control over the workers, the 3 main Union Federations have called a half day general strike for 13 October.

COBAS are controlled from below, with mass assemblies taking the important decisions.

Specially strong in the public sector, COBAS have resisted the state's plans for restructuring at the expense of the workers. The railways sections of COBAS have been at the heart of numerous strikes since 1988. The Schools COBAS were to the fore in action to win a much improved contract for teachers in 1989-90.Now the COBAS are starting to spread to the private sector. [Info from Centro di Documentazione Anarchica, c/o Casa dei diritti sociali, Via Tonzig, 35129 PADOVA, Italy.

ACT LOCALLY

Old McDonald had a farm

McDONALDS Hamburger Cop. is the largest retail property owner and food service organisation in the world, with annual sales of nearly £20 billion. Behind the glossy and cheerful "Ronald McDonald" is a reality of exploitation of workers and consumers, destroyed environment, unhealthy food, dead animals and a junk food culture.

In 1985 London Greenpeace started an anti McDonalds Day to be held every year on 16 October. Mega rich McD's took offence at this and are now prosecuting 2 activists it accuses of libel (the McLibel 2 !) The McLibel 2 are not mega-rich so they need financial support, any 'dirt' on McD's and letters of support to McLibel Support campaign, c/o London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1.

CENTRES FIGHT ON

HARINGEY unwaged centre is seeking community support to defy a Council eviction notice. Another independant unwaged centre resisting attack - Edinburgh - is still open and active.

Meanwhile claimants face Government proposals to cut umemployment benefit to 6 months, and to penalise unemployed judged not to be "actively seeking work" by cutting off **all** Income Support **without warning.**

* Restart advice leaflets, and info on National Claimants Fed. conference in Swindon on 21 November : SUM, Room 20, Pinehurst Peoples Centre, Beech Ave, Swindon.
* Haringey Unwaged Centre 081 802 9804 Edinburgh Unemployed Workers Centre 031 557 0718.

Block Telethon

"ON 18 July disabled people held a demonstration to block Telethon - against the system of charity in this country and to bring to an end this attack on our rights, humanity and citizenship.

Unless we actively and publicly show our anger they will not stop.

We believe, through strength, we can stop Telethon ever happening again."From Block Telethon, 3 CrawleyRd.,Woodgreen,LondonN22.

Reclaim the streets

AROUND 300 people protested at the 'Karmagedon' demo against the car on 1 August. With 5,000 people dying every year due to cars 'Reclaaim the Streets' want more cycle routes, better public transport and pedestrian areas. Info : Reclaim the Streets, 435 Coldharbour Lane, Brixton London SW9 8LN

The scales of justice

PARCELS of Royal salmon from an exclusive £1,000 per week estate have been mysteriously turning up on the doorsteps of elderly villagers in Helmsdale, Scotland.Each package bears the printed message : "From your Caring Poachers. We take from the rich and give to the poor."(Source : The Scotsman)

STUFF THE SUMMIT

Fresh from the National lottery of squandering billions on the sinking £, a new round of Summits bring together the Fortress Europe States. After Birmingham, Edinburgh plays 'host' to a massive junket on 10-12 December and a warm welcome from thousands of protestors is expected. Groups such as Scotland United and Scottish Democratic Resistance are agitating for a Scots Parliament and Scots Republic respectively, but internationalist/anarchist opposition is also being organised. An Edinburgh group coordinating resistance is PO Box 447, SWDO, Edinburgh

PETER McBRIDE

300 PEOPLE blocked a main road and demonstrated outside the local police station after 18-year-old Peter McBride was shot dead by British soldiers on September 4.

McBride had walked away from a stop-and-search after answering only a few questions. Pursued by troops he ran into the next street, where he was shot twice in the back. He had already been searched *before* he walked away: in his pockets were a packet of crisps and a paintbrush. Eyewitnesses described it as 'cold-blooded murder.'

McBride lived and died in a working-class Catholic area, where he had always been hassled by the army and police. Obviously Northern Ireland's unique in many ways, but it has to be put into context, since the lessons our rulers learn in one place are usually saved up for applying elsewhere. In some ways the North is no different from elsewhere in Europe: poverty, unemployment, and bad housing are facts of life, while legal and practical tricks learnt by the police are 'exported' to the mainland.

Meanwhile in eastern Germany the cops allow ethnic and cultural divisions to fester so as to better divide and rule—and justify a heavy police presence on estates in the East—while unemployment figures go through the roof. With deepening recession, it looks as though the New Europe will have more than a touch of Northern Ireland about it. It's a Europe we're determined to fight.

JOHN PEROTTI BACK IN SOLITARY

AFTER an attempt by prisoncrats to use an informer "wired for sound" had failed, our old friend John Perotti was flung back into solitary, where he has spent most of the past 8 years as an IWW prison-union organiser, and is being held in an "observation cell" under closed-circuit camera and microphone surveillance.

The prison powers are still trying to manufacture a reason for keeping him there.

PROTEST LETTERS; The Warden, Mansfield Correctional Institution, Mansfield, OHIO 44901, USA

SUPPORT; John Perotti #167712, PO Box 1368, Mansfield, OHIO 44901, USA.

INFO; Contact the John Perotti Defence Fund (JPDF) c/o Counter Information.

DONATIONS ARE MUCH NEEDED.

EDINBURGH ABC NO LONGER HAS ITS PO BOX AND CAN BE CONTACTED THROUGH THE CI ADDRESS FOR THE TIME BEING. DONATIONS MUCH-NEEDED.

SOME GOOD NEWS

NOEL & MARIE MURRAY were freed in August after serving 16 years in prison for a cop-murder that they've always denied.

They were the Irish "Republic"s longest serving prisoners.

All at the Counter Information Collective send their best wishes for the future to Marie & Noel.

Kiranjit Ahluwalia, serving Life for killing her violently abusive husband, was freed on appeal in September.

The decision was made on the basis of new medical evidence however, and not on a legal re-definition of "provocation".

Bill Dunne, editor of the prison paper "Marionette" has been transferred out of Marion Prison after serving 7 years and 7 monthsin the US' most notorious hellhole. Nice one Bill.

PERUINFO LEAFLET VIA CI-SAE

ABSENT MINDED

RESISTANCE to the Child Support Act (CSA) continues to grow. This Act will force lone parents to supply information on the absent parent, and then compel these absent parents to pay maintenance. The Treasury will pocket all money saved.

The act is aimed primarily at single mothers, the great majority of lone parents, and has been nicknamed The Absent Father Act.

In London the Campaign Against the Child Support Act (CACSA) has successfully defended single mothers against DSS harrassment.

In May a Manchester mother won a written apology from the DSS Child Support Unit after she complained of harrassment when the DSS tried to force her to attend an interview under the CSA. Until April 1993 it is illegal for the DSS to threaten to cut a single parent's benefit if she or he refuses to provide information about the absent parent. DSS interviews are not compulsory.

In Brighton, the Unemployed Centre has been leafletting the local market, hospitals, nurseries, schools, post-offices, etc.

INFO; CACSA, PO Box 287, LONDON NW6 5QU.

BUCACSA, Prior House, 6 Tilbury Place, BRIGHTON BN2

GUILTY OF BEING IRISH

IRISH prisoners continue to be brutalised in English jails.

Eamon O'Donnell and Sean Cruikshank are facing allegations of arson and criminal damage. They are being systematically deprived of sleep, and regularly subjected to vicious strip-searches. O'Donnell is now staging a blanket-protest. Support is urgently needed.

Eamon O'Donnell CX1344, HMP Wakefield, 5 Love Lane, Wakefield. Protest letters to the governor of Wakefield prison.

ACTION FOR ANDRE

ANDRE Villaverde is a Peruvian Anarchist prisoner. On 27 October 1991 he was arrested and accused of committing sabotage. Andres is held in Peru's maximum security prison, even though police are unable to rovide any substantial evidence.

An International Day of Action has been called for 30 October for the release of Andres. Letters faxs etc to sent to Sr. Presidente alberto Fujimori, Palacio de Gobierno, Plaza de Armas , Lima 1, Peru.

Water rip off !

"THE CHEEK of it! They plan to make us pay through the nose for using water!"

Yes, the government wants to privatise Scotland's water industry - but massive public opposition threatens a flood-tide of resistance.

With privatisation plans still 3 years off, local groups and meetings are already declaring that they will refuse to pay the private water bills and will stop water disconnections and the installation of water meters.

One such group is Ibrox Cessnock Anti Poll Tax Group in Glasgow. Their leaflet declares :

"After running down investment in water treatment, the government now wants to privatise the supply of water to create profits for their backers. By selling off the water plants to private companies...the price will be forced up, and meters introduced.....

Water privatisation in England and Wales reveals a horrific 55,000 families threatened with disconnection....

MASS REFUSAL

We have to fight this at all stages, campaigning against implementation to scare off investors; to threaten the introduction of meters, and to launch a campaign of mass refusal...

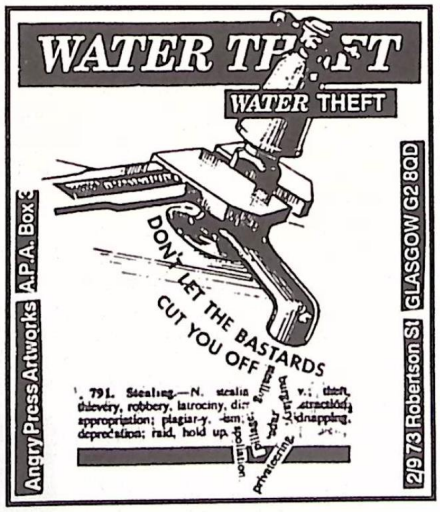
The anti poll tax movement shows the government can be beat. This time the apologists for this rotten system, the Labour Party, other politicians and Union leaders are seeking to take over the campaign from the word go. This must not happen.

Only local groups combining education at streetstalls and demonstrations, and prepared with others to engage in direct action involving the people, can beat the new Water Barons. Labour invests public funds in Private Water Companies, Labour-led Councils are fitting meters to new buildings and they always sabotage our resistance by telling us to remain 'within the law'.

87% against water privatisation.
4% in favour.
Poll conducted in Scotland and published
Glasgow Herald 5.9.92

This is impossible. The law is rigged in favour of big business and profiteering, with plans to sell off land owned by water boards.....

If you are angry at this threat to our health join us... *This water theft can be stopped.* "



HANDS OFF OUR WATER
Demo in Glasgow 21 November 1992
Details 041 227 5604

MUSHROOMING

Local meetings against the water sell-off are mushrooming. The Hands Off Our Water campaign was launched in September in Glasgow with a reported 176 reps from 70 different organisations, and a policy of non-payment and direct action.

The experience of the anti poll tax movment shows the need for genuine grass-roots control. Though very active in areas like Glasgow, Scottish Militant Labour tend to subordinate grass-roots struggles to their own efforts to replace the Labour Party as the "representatives" of the working class.

Anger at water privatisation, combined with continuing mass poll tax non-payment and the likliehood of widespread council tax non-payment, highlights the possibility of community self-organisation that unites all 3 struggles - and possibly also takes on other struggles like resistance to racist harassment. Groups like Stockbridge New Town Solidarity Network in Edinburgh are attempting to develop in this direction. Community resistance will hopefully be joined by anti privatistion industrial action by the water workers, whose 7,000 jobs are under threat.

Stockbridge New Town Solidarity Network 031 667 4299 , 332 7547

Autonomous Assembly, All-Scotland coordination forum -c/o free university network, 28 King St., Glasgow G1 5QP.

Uncollectable!

£400 MILLION of unpaid poll tax has been written off by councils countrywide as uncollectable, the Dept. of Environment reports.

Non-payers in England and Wales owe over £1 billion! In Scotland the non-payment rate for '92-93 poll tax income is 37% (Scotsman 25.9.92). Taking into account those on rebates and not registered, this means about half Scotland's population are not paying.

Prison threats are not intimidating non-payers in England and Wales. Most beat the jailing threat by just not turning up to the committal hearing. Camden Council's plan to start committals suffered a set-back on 15 July - angry anti poll tax protestors pelted councillors with eggs and stinkbombs, successfully stopping the Council meeting!

The Council Tax starts April 1993. Though concessions have been won - Income Support claimants and students pay nothing - this tax still protects the rich, penalises many on low incomes, and attacks local services. Many will not pay. Groups like London Fight the Poll Tax and Tottenham Against the Poll Tax are now starting to campaign against the Council Tax too.

* Write to the 5 Colchester demo prisoners, Trafalgar Sq. prisoner Tim Donaghy, and jailed non-payers - PT Prisoners Support Network 071 738 7586.
* Info on planned all-Britain apt/anti cuts conference : NW APT Forum 061 707 1584
* New apt leaflet from Haringey (40,000 printed!) : Hornsey & Wood Green Solidarity Grp. 081 341 3372.
* London Fight the Poll Tax bulletin 081 692 9181 (John). *Clwyd APT Fed., PO Box 661, Wrecsam LL11 1HQ. *Lothian APT hotline 031 557 0718.

A WORLD TO WIN

BUSINESS AS USUAL

The A.N.C. leadership demonstrated their statist plans when they gave asurances in advance of the general strike on 3rd & 4th of August that protests would be "controlled and orderly" and outlawed occupations or sabotage . The 28 deaths at the hands of troops of the Ciskei puppet homeland on September 7th revealed the alliance of Homeland states and South Africa military circles. Mandela has used Judge Goldstone's report chiefly blaming the Ciskei troops to back away from mass action and resume talks with De Klerk.

PROTECTING THE WILD

4,000 people demonstrated in the Valee d' Aspe, France on 30 May against a Motorway planned to go through a nature reserve. In Glasgow , a lone protestor has camped on the route of a motorway extension through the countryside of the Pollok Estate, winning support from nearby Pollok residents.

OWN GOAL?

Two Iranian journalists have been gaoled for depicting the late Ayatollah Khomeini as a footballer.

REMEMBERING CHATILA

Despite the election result,shootings continue in Israeli occupied Palestine. On 17th September, the 10th Anniversary of the Sabra & Chatila massacres by Lebanese Falangists encouraged by Israeli commanders, 6 were shot during a demonstration in the gaza strip.

CHAD CLASHES

Hundreds of women clashed for 2 hours with Police who blocked the route of a march through the Chad capital N'Djamena on 20th July protesting against harsh austerity cuts.

COSMETIC CAPITALISM

120 women workers sacked by Avon Cosmetics in Mexico City have launched an international appeal to press for reinstatement. The Unions colluded in the redundancies.

JAPAN RIOTS

On 1st & 2nd October 1,000 unemployed Japanese workers rioted in a poor district of Osaka. In Airin, grievances exploded when emergency welfare payments were withdrawn for the day labourers.

DUTCH DEMOS

Anti-militarist action took place at Enschede Airbase and 10 other military sites in support of Jailed activist Kees Koning.,on 3/4th May.(A Infos ,Netherlands).

TO HELL WITH SHELL

80 unarmed villagers were massacred and 495 houses razed by federal Nigerian troops after the Shell Oil Company was beseiged by demonstrators in River State complaining about polluted land a suppressed Judicial Commission confirmed.(reports: 8-10-92).

SWEDES PROTEST

Tens of thousands demonstrated on October 6th against welfare cuts,tax rises and astronomical interest rates.

HOT AUTUMN IN GREECE

On 10th September police clashed with demonstrators during a march on the Parliament Building in Athens by 100,000 Public Sector workers. Austerity measures to slash Pension provision has angered workers,who have proved resistant to attempts by the State to deflect anger by the diversion of the 'Macedonia' dispute with the former Yugoslav republic. Attempts to ban demonstrations in nearby Salonika were ignored by thousands. Thousands of busworkers continue on indefinite strike against redundancies and privatisation. However, with little emergence of independent rank-and-file committees as in Italy, the Unions sold out the strikers in a revised cuts package.

HEIGHTS EXPLOSION

The Washington Heights area of North Manhattan in New York errupted in rebellion against the Police and big business from July 6th. The killing of 23 year old Jose Garcia sparked the unrest by the mostly Dominican neighbourhood.

After a march on the 34th Precinct Pig Station was blocked, fighting spread as far south as Harlem. Banks and fast-food chain outlets were hastily boarded up, and masked young women kept watch over a peoples memorial at the site of the Police killing. Mayor Dinkins, a black liberal politician hated by the racist Police defused the unrest by promising an inquiry, although powerful drug barons also moved in after 2 days to restore 'business as usual'.
(Source @ Wire NYC Eco-Media bulletin).

BACK IN THE CIS

AS HYPERINFLATION continues—around 1000% since January—the rulers are quite aware that the only solution to the crisis, especially given the recession elsewhere, is to smash living-standards even more than they've done already. Disagreements are over when and how: thus Arkady Volsky's Employers' Union (equivalent of the CBI) calls for reform to be slowed down, whereas some of the yuppies of the Yeltsin era hold such 'radical' views as to make the coke-heads of City trading-floors look like Guardian-readers.

RUSSIAN ROULETTE

Meanwhile Yeltsin fiddles while the underlying antagonisms get deeper and deeper—his latest move being to give everyone 18000 roubles' worth of free shares in hived-off firms (about a month's wages). Most people are expected just to flog them, but they may get less for them than expected, since many of the firms will have had their assets stripped before privatisation.

Struggles are numerous—usually local, but often of no mean size. In Novosibirsk 18000 workers in the defence industry struck against loss of work due to conversion. Transport workers in St. Petersburg successfully struck for more wages, and Russian air traffic controllers are involved in a bitter struggle for pay and conditions. Coalminers struck in Vorkuta to force bosses to pay them on time (nearly a billion roubles were rushed in in a single week); and anger rises in the Donbas as working conditions deteriorate (one miner is killed every day in the Ukraine alone). Meanwhile, there is increasing distrust of collaborationist union leaders steadily building up their careers in negotiating and keeping things calm.

In Latvia the Government has introduced bread coupons for the poor even as the Prime Minister announces that everyone should either work harder or eat less. Bread riots remain a strong possibility.

GET INVOLVED !
If you like Counter Info, we invite you to write to us, and also to the other groups listed below :
AK Distribution, 3 Balmoral Pl., Stirling FK8 2RD (publications on mail order)
Anarchist Communist Federation, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St., London E1 7QX
Attack International, BM 6577, London WCIN 3XX
Class War : PO Box 1021, Edinburgh EH8 9PW : PO Box 496, Glasgow G14 0PG
Direct Action Movement - IWA, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15.
London Greenpeace, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1
Norwich Solidarity Centre - write PO Box 73, Norwich NR1 2EB
Stockbridge New Town Solidarity Network, c/o J.Ball, 24 Dean Pk. St., Edinburgh EH4 1JT
Tottenham Solidarity Network, c/o 72 West Green Rd., London N15
(If your group would like to be considered for listing, please write to CI in Edinburgh.)

WAR ON WASTELAND

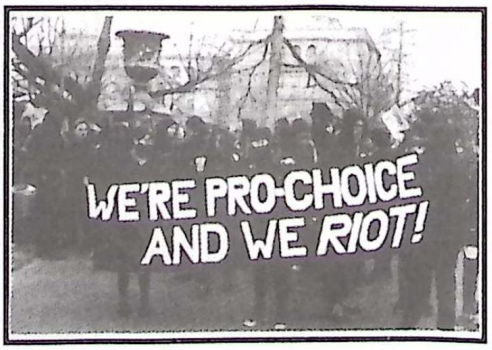
With Glasgow Celtic Football Club wanting to move to Cambuslang, the problem of industrial waste from old industries has surfaced. In Cambuslang, the cocktail of toxic chemicals like arsenic, cyanide, cadmium and asbestos has led to health problems such as cancer, breathing problems, and spontaneous abortions.

A local group, Cambuslang/Carmyle/Rutherglen Against Pollution (CCRAP), has been set up to highlight the environmental damage which has occurred in the past and they hope to avoid in the future.

HEALTH FIRST

THE FIGHT over a woman's right to reproductive choice dominates American politics. With the high media profile of anti-choice groups like Operation Rescue, many young and militant feminist groups are coming onto the scene and joining the battle. Women's Health Action and Mobilisation (WHAM), Women's Action Coalition (WAC) and the punk-feminist Riot Grrrl have got support from young, pissed-off women, and often work together with gay rights groups like ACT-UP and Queer Nation.

The massive pro-choice rally in Washington DC on 4 April, organised by the Mainstream National Organisation for Women, attracted over 700,000 people. The anarchist contingent was a noticeable element, both for its extreme chaoticness and for its banners saying 'We're Pro-Choice and We Riot.' Part of the group trashed the 'cemetery' which some anti-choicers had set up for" victims" of legal abortions, and the entire contingent found itself chased through parks and bushes by cops on motorbikes. No-one was arrested.



BEATING THE BACKLASH

On 3 June the US Supreme Court handed down a decision upholding most of the the restrictions on abortion, including laws on parental consents and rules on 24-hour waiting periods.

Two weeks later, during the Democratic Convention, Operation Rescue (OR) came to New York City for an assault on abortion clinics. As in Buffalo, NY, earlier in the spring, the bastards found themselves in hostile territory. At every point OR militants were outnumbered by well-organised clinic defence, and didn't shut down a single clinic.

Because of the Court's decision, the abortion battle now moves to State level and to the streets of each State's capital city. The fight also continues against Operation Rescue, who in Houston plan new offensives in the autumn. But keeping clinics open is not enough: women need to reclaim healthcare for themselves. More and more groups are distributing information about herbal medicine and gynaecological self-care, and are learning techniques of menstrual extraction, a safe, home method of abortion.

Contacts: info on self-healthcare: P.O.Box 544, Ironband Station, Newark, NJ 07105, U.S.A; ongoing work for reproductive choice and struggles around all kinds of women's health issues, contact: WHAM!, P.O.Box 733, New York City, NY 10009, U.S.A. (tel: 212-713-5966).

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COLLECTED BACK ISSUES 1 - 33 £6 FROM CI EDINBURGH ADDRESS. For info on CI distribution and revolutionary activities in the north of England please write to Counter Info, c/o 52 Call Lane, Leeds LS1 6DT. For all other matters please write COUNTER INFO, PIGEONHOLE CI, C/O 11 FORTH ST., EDINBURGH EH1, SCOTLAND.
(This issue went to press 14 October 1992)

T/SOR/49/1/6

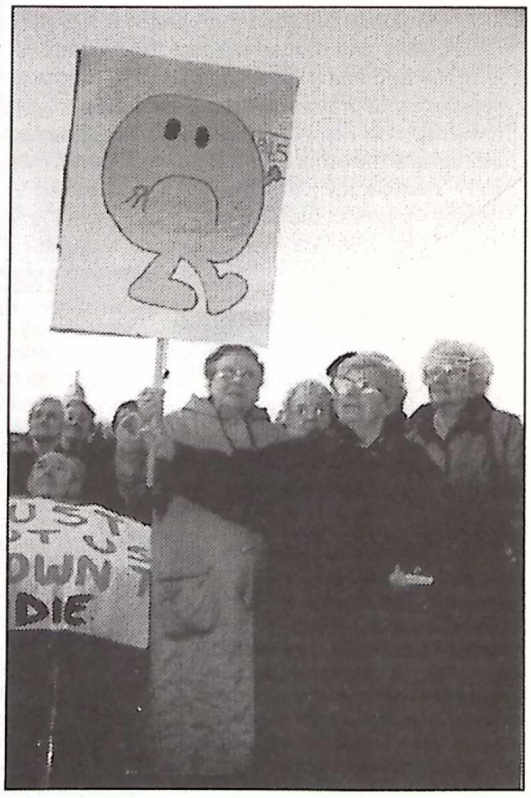
COUNTER INFORMATION

No.48 March/April/May 1997 Free/Donation

Scots Fight Attacks By Labour and Tories

In April 1996, when local government in Scotland was reorganised, the Tories deliberately ensured the new authorities had less money than they needed to run the services we rely on. They did this by cutting central government grants, capping spending and vindictively redrawing boundaries, particularly in Glasgow, where its more affluent suburbs have been given to neighbouring councils.

Services including schools, nurseries, community centres, sheltered housing schemes, libraries and sports centres are facing redundancies and savage cuts. These cuts are largely being made by Labour politicians who are more interested in their own power, position and perks than standing with the working class to fight the Tories. And New Labour have made it clear that there will be little change if they win the general election.



Across Scotland, people who use services, workers and other members of local communities have been coming together to fight this calculated, premeditated attack on working people. They are building on last years victories when a number of services including schools and neighbourhood centres were saved by community occupations and campaigns.

STRIKE ACTION

Despite initial inaction and delaying tactics, demands from grass roots members has forced the leadership of several local government unions to successfully ballot for days of strike action, including 6 March when tens of thousands of council workers were out on strike across Scotland. In Glasgow, this forced the Council to abandon its budget meeting until the following Monday, when again, thousands of staff walked out and lobbied the Council. Other actions have included:

Glasgow

* Jan. Self-organised group of disabled people force the council to reverse their plan to evict them by staging an overnight occupation.
* 25 Jan. 20,00 people march through city centre to protest at education cuts.
* 10 Feb. Cuts in transport for voluntary groups are reversed after users lobby the Labour Group meeting.
* 17-24 Feb. Library staff strike.
* 20 Feb. Thousands of council workers strike, mass lobby and illegal march outside City Chambers. Residents of sheltered housing scheme in Govan, including one man aged 100 who took part in the hunger marches of the 1920's and 30's stood side by side with a new generation of activists to address a rally to protest at the scrapping of the warden scheme. Residents not able to leave their homes, showed support by hanging towels from their windows.
* 4-6 Mar. Hundreds of staff in Property Services strike.
* 5 Mar. Over 100 Social work staff walk out in disgust as cuts in jobs and services are announced.
* 9 Mar. 30+ social work staff picket on Sunday morning to uphold a ban on overtime working.
* 10 Mar. OCCUPATION of City Chambers by Community Halls threatened with closure with banners displayed & the entrance blockaded by 1000 strikers, with Councillors & scabs turned away.

Kirkcaldy, Fife

* 22 Feb. Over 500 marched in protest at cuts in jobs and services.

Stornoway, Western Isles

* 3 Mar. Children and parents lobby Scottish Secretary Forsyth over education cuts.

Edinburgh

* 21 Jan. Families demonstrate over cuts at meeting of Wester Hailes Partnership Board.
* 6 Feb. 500 demonstrators march in protest at council cuts - roads blocked, apparently inspired by actions of French workers.
* 13 Feb. Catering workers hand councillors cold packed lunches in protest at plans to axe hot school meals.
* 20 Feb. Disabled people rally against cuts in access project.
* 22 Feb. Children and parents from 3 schools held marches to protest at school closures. Petition handed to Scottish Secretary.
* 6 Mar. Over 600 strikers and service users demonstrate at council meeting.

As we go to press, strikes continue,and occupations are likely

Social Justice for the Dockers

16 months ago, 500 Liverpool dockers, many with 20-30 years service, were sacked for refusing to cross a picket line. The privatisation of Britain's ports in 1989 opened up the way for Mersey Harbour & Dock Company to use casual labour to do dockers' jobs.

On 20th January, dockers, seafarers and other workers in 105 ports and cities, in 27 countries joined workplace meetings, work-to-rules, demonstrations at British Government overseas offices and held full-scale strikes:

- **West Coast U.S.A.**: all ports stopped for at least 8 hours. In Los Angeles alone, over 100 cranes were stopped, with 32 ships in harbour and another 16 due that day.
- **Denmark**: The ports of Aarhus and Copenhagen had 24 hour stoppages.
- **Liverpool**: A continuous mass picket of Seaforth Container terminal, and 3 cranes occupied for 27 hours, prevented unloading of the *Lake Crie* for 35 hours.

The picket of dockers and ***Women of the Waterfront*** included delegations from the victorious occupation of the Glasgow engineering firm, *Glaciers*, and the Darlington kitchen firm, *Magnet* where workers remain sacked.

A major march in London on April 12th for Social Justice (no matter who is elected!) is sponsored by the Liverpool Dockers, Reclaim the Future and other workers in struggle. For more details of the dockers dispute contact Liverpool Dock Shop Stewards Committee c/o 19 Scorton St., L6 4AS, tel 0151-207-3388. see also CI No.47 and *Subversion* No.18 (Large SAE from Dept. 10, 1 Newton St., Manchester M1 1HW).

Magnet Repels !

350 Magnet Workers sacked in September '96 in Darlington for demanding their first pay rise in 3 years. A parent company Director, Mr. Antonini, paid himself £772,000 for 12 months 'work'!

The former employees of the kitchen unit company have got support from Job Centre workers who blacked adverts for scab replacements. They have also linked up with Hospital strikers in Newcastle, the Liverpool Dockers, the 31 workers sacked at Critchley Labels in south Wales for demanding union recognition, and anarchists who have helped to picket Magnet showrooms. Donations (to *Magnet Family Hardship Fund*) & Messages of support to Magnet Strike Committee c/o Ian Crammond, 109 Jedburgh Dr., Darlington DL3 9UP

Hillingdon - Support Needed

Hillingdon Hospital Workers are another group of workers who have learned who their true friends are in a dispute. Unison refuse to pay hardship money, 18 months after the workers were sacked by Pall Mall, and continue to undermine solidarity for the workers who have linked up with others in struggle. Contact Malkiat Bilku on 0956-135311.

World to Win

WATER 'BOUT THAT!

On December 19, the Irish govt. announced the abolition of the hated water charges. The success of the campaign by the Federation of Anti-Water Charges was built on a strong grassroots movement with 17,000 households joining. Total arrears are thought to be IR£25m with 80% of households eligible to pay, either behind or having paid nothing. The battle's not won yet, though, as council officials have threatened to 'pursue arrears to the bitter end' and a number of families are having to appeal against court disconnection orders. Info: *Black Flag, Ainrial.*

STANDSTILL BUDGET

The last week of 96 saw Israel brought to a standstill as 400,000 workers, mainly in the public sector, struck for 5 days in protest at the government's proposed budget cuts. The telephone company, banks, postoffices, seaports, airports and radio and TV stations were all affected by the strike which forced the Knesset to reject the budget. The govt. wants to reduce deficits and pay for financial incentives to settlers on the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The Israeli working class have already suffered through increased taxes and welfare cuts.

BOGOTA BACKS DOWN

An 8 day strike by 800,000 public sector workers in Colombia forced the Govt. to back down on its plans to limit wage increases to 9% below inflation.

UNION BOSSES - who needs them?

Following a 97% vote for strike action in February, Ireland's nurses have forced their govt. to dish out IR£80m including nearly IR£30m in back pay. They previously rejected 4 separate deals negotiated by union leaders despite govt. protests that there was no more money.

Villagers REFUSE to THO DA LINE

People in the North Vietnamese village of Tho Da, north of Hanoi, fear venturing outside its confines after fights with riot police. The village is to be destroyed to make way for a golf course but villagers, resigned to losing their land, are demanding adequate compensation and have clashed with security forces twice in the last year. 1 woman was killed when police tried to destroy the crop in May 96. On December 30, townspeople fought a pitched battle with cops.

JO'BURG - MEET THE NEW BOSS

On February 6, protests against rates payments in Johannesburg turned into battles with police. At least 2 adults and 2 children were killed and scores injured following the protests in 8 mixed-race townships, south-west of the city, where unemployment runs at 80%. The Southern Metro Council, which wants £80m in unpaid bills, was rumoured to be preparing to evict or cut off electricity from those in arrears. Cops fired rubber bullets during the day-long fighting and army units were called in as barricades went up.

STATE VERSUS THE WORKERS

On 16 Feb, Iranian riot cops arrested scores of oil workers, in Tehran, demonstrating at the Oil Ministry in demand of higher pay.

THE HEAVIEST PENALTY

SUICIDE in prison has reached an all-time high.. 6 young women have hanged themselves in Cornton Vale prison, Stirling, Scotland in the past 18 months.

On 3 March Fatal Accident Enquiries commenced on 3 of the deaths. Angela Bolan's one-time cell mate told how Angela, while withdrawing from heroin, was left alone in a cell for 5 hours, with no-one checking on her.

• The rate of prison suicide is now 10 times that on the outside

• The prison death rate now exceeds the rate of capital punishment before its 1964 abolition

• January 1995 to May 1996 saw 81 prison suicides in England and Wales

• There were 381prison suicides between 1990-95

The obsession with incarceration is killing dozens of petty-offending working class youngsters whose 'crime' is impoverished alienation from the good things of life. While the rich elite gets richer, we get the Job Seekers Allowance, crap jobs, poor health care and more, **more** prisons. Or as they used to say, "It's the rich wot cause the trouble, and the poor wot gets the blame." And pays the heaviest penalty.

Taking Liberties (30p, free to prisoners), c/o London ABC, 121 Railton Rd, London SE2.

Prison Watch (monitors deaths in custody), 24 Rochester Close, Derby DE24 OHS

NOBODY'S FOOL
A new society:what you cannot vote for !

A General Election while appearing to offer change, delivers nothing. Even before the rightward shift 'new' Labour made the Liberal Democrats & the SNP appear vaguely radical, only tinkering with the system could result from voting.

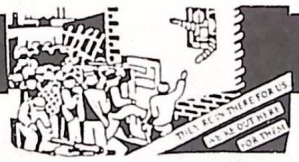
But voting nobody is not enough. Take the recent Pakistan elections, 67% didn't vote. In the USA, of those registered, it was 51% for nobody. Even in Australia, where voting is 'compulsory', a defiant minority vote nobody with little result.

Cynicism is not enough. We have to accentuate the 'positive' in what we believe in. Not voting in itself will not usher it in, but it's a start:

* education & learning will be in a stimulating environment , not geared to qualifications or to fit market needs ;
* the environment will come first before production & 'development';
* profit and the system of exploitation is abolished, along with bosses & firms;
* money (as in the recent "Startrek" movie!) will have ceased to exist;
* production will be for need and not profit, and not linked to advertising;
* with the destruction of the capitalist system, the poverty of 'developing' nations will be overturned by introducing sustainable production freed from exploitation;
* A world without borders, with people free to travel without racist immigration controls;
* art, sport and music, as part of our everyday life, free from exploitation and star status;
* Relations between men and women would be based on equality and mutual respect (free of sex role stereotypes).

These and many other qualitative changes can only begin when resistance to present values based on exchange are bolstered by a widespread vision of what is possible based on respect for human beings and the other creatures of the planet. The fraud of 'representative democracy', the theft of our dreams by impostors, these belong to politicians & Election circuses the world over. What is worth fighting for, cannot be given or voted for. Real choice begins here.

INSIDE INFO



HUNGER STRIKE

THE ROCHESTER hunger strike was started on 6 January 1997, by refugees and asylum seekers held without time limit, charges, or proper medical or legal provisions, and with no avenue of complaint. They are calling for an independent body and judical committee to hear their cases.

Some have been held for 2 years or more. Rochester is a centre of opposition for hundreds of people held in detention. There have been protests at Winson Green, Campsfield, Harmondsworth, Haslar, Bedsford, and many other prisons.

Half of all detainees are held in prison, 90% of those detained are black, and 45% are suffering from mental or physical health conditions resulting from torture or other ill-treatment.

The detainees are men, women and children trying to reach a place of safety after suffering rape, torture, persecution or other violence. They and other detainees are regularly strip-searched, taunted and suffer other abuse.

The hunger strike was suspended in late February but the refugees' struggle still continues.

Latest info from Rochester Hunger Strike Support Group, c/o Hackney Unison, 219 Mare St., London E8 3QQ. 0181 985 7134 (Brian Debus) or 0181 986 3606.

• Fact-packed newsletter available from National Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns, 22 Berners St., Birmingham B19 2DR. Tel *0121 554 6947 fax 0121 507 1567 e mail johno @ gapncadc.demon.co.uk*

REPRESSION - ITALIAN STYLE

JEAN WEIR, Alfredo Bonnano and 13 other anarchists have been jailed in a state clampdown in Italy. October and November saw more police raids on anarchists' homes - but also solidarity activity, eg in Rome and Verona. A solidarity picket descended on an Italian Consulate in Greece.

CONTACT *Comitato di Difesa Anarchici, c/o El Paso Occupato, via Passo Buole 47, 10127 Torino, Italy. Fax/tel +39 11 317 41 07.* Also *http://www.ecn.org/zero/canenero.htm*

SQUATS RESIST in SPAIN

Since the introduction of the Spanish state's New Penal Code in October 1996, 40 squats have been evicted and over 200 arrested.

On 20 December 1996 the 'Kasal Popular' in Valencia was evicted. There were days of resistance and sabotage actions. Solidarity actions took place all over the country.

A squatted central cinema in Barcelona resisted the court ordered eviction of 17 July until 28 October. The morning rose on a military operation involving 30 police vans, 2 helicopters and 200 heavily armed police. After 3 hours of confrontation, involving rubber cannon balls, smoke cannisters and high power water hoses (the state!) and cans of paint, human determination and firecrackers (the people!) the end credits came up with 48 arrested and 15 injured.

On 14 January another building was squatted in response to the cinema eviction. The new squat kicked off after a demo with partying, performances, and music. Info Zizana, apdo.400, 26080 Logrono, Spain.

LOUISE CLARK is an Edinburgh woman unjustly imprisoned for 5 years in Cornton Vale prison for the murder of her abusive partner who made her life hell for years. Her Support Campaign has collected 2,000 plus signatures on a petition and has organised a **demo** outside Cornton Vale on **15 March.**

SANS PAPIERS SAY NO to FORTESS EUROPE

The French State is trying to close the doors of its country against immigrant and refugee people by denying them legal status and forcible deportations.

The number of deportations from France has risen dramatically. In 1995 there were around 7,500 deportations and in 1996 11,733.

In protest, 300 "illegal immigrants" (many of whom had lived in France for years) occupied St. Bernard church in Paris for 2 months until violently evicted on August 23 1996. Since then the *Sans Papiers* movement has swelled with 24 Sans Papiers collectives across France including the 3rd collective of over 1,200 people of 30 nationalities.

The autonomously organised *Sans Papiers* resisted pressure from leftist anti-racist organisations and the immigration authorities to differentiate between those who had a better or worse chance of getting legal status.

They unite in demanding - Resident permits for all *Sans Papiers* - The immediate release of all those currently imprisoned - Immediate suspension of all deportations - The return of those who have been deported - Repeal of anti-immigrant legislation.

"Every time the battle lost momentum, women met and found initiatives to restart the struggle".

The Sans Papieres (an autonomous womens collective of the Sans Papiers movement) have been on hunger strikes fighting for nursery place provision and freedom. As the Sans Papiers strengthened the state regrouped and police violence escalated.

29 October 1996 - 500 invaded the reception of the immigration office and demanded talks. Armed men brutally forced 447 people to a detainment depot.

4 November 1996 - 500 people arrested at demonstration.

11 November 1996 - Over 400 people invaded a high profile theatre event attended by left -wing glitterati. A *Sans Papieres* spokeswoman stood up and called for unity in struggle of the exploited of the world and for the right of people to travel globally without racist state control. They were then chucked out.

Sans Papiers occupied a disused trade union building and remain after 6 months. Buildings are frequently squatted for shorter periods.

22 Febuary 1997 - 150 thousand marched through Paris followed by riots over the next few days with police and protestors injured as crowds were "dispersed" with teargas.

The *Sans Papiers* draw support for their struggle from many sectors of French society on their own terms. Solidarity pickets have been held outside the French Embassy in London, Rome and Amsterdam. The *Sans Papiers* are having an international day of action on 18 March and have organised an international petition. Send your protests to and support of the 5 demands to: *M. le Premier Ministre, 58, rue de Varenne, 75007, Paris.* Fax: ++(331) 45 44 15 72 & M.le President de la Republique, 55, rue de fbg. St. Honore, 75008 Paris. fax: ++(331) 47 42 24 65 Contact: ***Coordination Nationale des 'Sans Papiers', 22, rue Pajol, 75018 Paris, France.*** Fax: ++(331)4607 16 19 & E-mail: pajol@bok.net & Web site http://bok.net/pajol

NUCLEAR POWER? Nein Danke.
The biggest and most expensive peacetime mobilisation of German police took place during the first week in March. 30,000 cops were needed to allow the delivery of nuclear waste to the northern town of Gorleben after 10,000 encamped protestors blocked the final part of the convoy's route. Over 100 were injured as cops forced their way through with truncheons and water canon. 1,000 responded with stones and petrol bombs.

Celebrating Women in Fightback

The following is a short report from an anarchafeminist in Stockholm, Sweden:

WE CALL ourselves anarchafeminists because we want to emphasise that the feminism we identify with is not the feminism that seeks to incorporate women into the current society. We realise that there are multiple oppressions such as racism, capitalism,homophobia etc. and that women's liberation can only be achieved through the destruction of all oppressions.

However, we see the necessity for women to organise separately as women, as well as organising in mixed groups, because sexist structures are also found within the anarchist movement. Separatism is then a strategy to break patriarchal patterns but it is a separatism that exists within an anarchist framework.

In the late 80s and early 90s, anarchist women started organising a women's free-zone for women to meet, discuss and organise politically. There is an anarchafeminist cafe held in the anarchist centre RSM, in Stockholm (once a week). It is run collectively by women. The collective organises talks in order to spread information about everything from class struggle, international women's struggle to lesbianism. Participation and activity is emphasised and the idea is to create a platform for political action for women within an anarchafeminist revolutionary framework.

8th of March '96 saw a busy day of activity. Around 40 women attacked targets of their choice in order to mark the celebration of International Women's Day. Graffiti, spraypainting and window smashing were some expressions of this celebration. Among the targets were the Swedish multinational H&M, a clothes company exploiting third world labour while simultaneously exploiting women's bodies for profit in Sweden through their infamous ad campaigns.

Later on that day the same company was hit again by angry women blocking the entrance of one of their shops during peak shopping hours. During the blockade no one was let in the shop. Apart from causing economic damage to H&M the blockade was given a lot of attention by passersby and the police of course...Apart from this, the blockade showed the determination of the group of women. This is merely one example of anarchafeminist resistance. the main thing though is to fight back wherever and whenever - don't let the bastards get you down!

In solidarity.

An anarchafeminist group, 'Tantrum' is now organising in Glasgow. To get in touch write to Tantrum c/o CI.

2ND CLASS in GERMANY

Tens of thousands of Turkish schoolchildren stayed away from school and protested against a new law which obliges them to apply for residence permits to remain in the country. The 2.2 milion members of Germany's Turkish community do not have German citizenship.

Days that shook the tarmac.

France: Striking haulage drivers throughout France managed to win concessions from the Government after successfully blockading ports, oil-refineries and petrol depots in which over 200 separate barricades were erected.

The 12 day protests in November '96 ended in victory when the drivers won a wage increase, a drop in retirement age from 60 to 55, and a shorter working day.

The protest later drew support from airline and railway workers.

Spain: Inspired by events in France, drivers in Spain went on the offensive in February '97.

Drawing up demands similar to their comrades in France the barricades went up.

Blockading oil terminals, petrol stations and ports caused large firms such as Renault, Mercedes-Benz and Opel to halt production. Supplies to shops were affected but drivers and Unions asked people not to hoard food as there was still enough to go round.

Even though 80% of Spain's drivers supported the demands, on March 1st Union leaders called off the strike, "in the national interest". The Government refused to lower the age of retirement on full benefits.

Korea Opportunities

At a secret vote of the South Korean parliament on December 26th '96, a law was passed that cut workers' rights :

* Making it easier for bosses to lay off workers;
* Banning the formation of 2 unions in one workplace - until 2002;
* Banning the formation of umbrella labour groups - until 2000;
* Increasing powers for the spy agency (to stifle political dissent).

The Korean Government is trying to copy the 'flexible' approach of the U.K. Government !

In a swift response, on December 27th, workers in the car industry, exporting and dockers went on strike, amounting to 300,000 on strike.

In Seoul, 6,000 demonstrators met riot police and tear gas with a greeting of bottles and paving stones. In Ulsan, 20,000 Hyundai workers held a rally burning an effigy of President Kim Young-Sam and chanting: "Fight, Fight, Fight".

On March 2nd the struggle continues with a half-day general stoppage.

DAVE MORRIS defies police to read out the "What's Wrong With McDonalds?" leaflet at a 100 strong demo at McDonalds, Princes St, Edinburgh on 22 Feb. Dave and Helen Steele were sued by McLiars for distributing such leaflets. Leaflet distribution will continue whatever the trial verdict, expected in May. ***McLibel, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1. 0171 713 1269*** (Photo : Norrie, Wester Hailes)

Bougainville resists

150 MERCENARIES have been hired by the government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) as it prepares to attack rebels on the island of Bougainville, at the western end of the Solomon Islands archipelago, north of Australia. Although ethnically part of the islands, power-broking early this century by European colonial powers forced the 160,000 islanders to go under PNG rule.

In 1969, the Australian owned CRA/RTZ copper mine at Panguna was forcibly established leaving 800 people homeless and a huge trail of environmental damage, destroying the gardening and fishing subsidence living. Bougainvilleans opposed the mine from day one and forcibly closed it in 1988, adopting guerilla tactics.

PNG, with Australian backing, sent its riot police and army to re-open the mine. Bougainvilleans formed the B'ville Revolutionary Army (BRA), declaring independence. A blockade by PNG has caused over 10,000 deaths, but central B'ville, with 100,000 people, remains in BRA hands.

Australia is heavily involved in the war, supplying training and equipment to the PNG army whose attacks have intensified lately. On Nov 26, 2 children were killed by PNG forces in Bigisagu village; 9 people, including 4 kids, died when a mortar bomb hit the Malabita care centre on Nov 28. 11 were massacred in Mokakuru on Dec 1st.

BFM(UK),SDEF!, Prior House, Tilbury Pl., Brighton. BFM, PO Box134, Erskineville, NSW 2043, Australia http://www.magna.com.au/~sashab

Lost in limbo

An Edinburgh postal worker writes:

YET again the Communication Workers Union bureaucracy has managed to engineer the postal dispute into limbo.

In a 2nd ballot members voted to continue to resist the "Employer Agenda". But then the CWU leaders reached an interim settlement with Royal Mail - more negotiations over team working and the 2nd delivery guarantees - and all action was suspended.

CWU leaders put the deal to the vote only as a package that included acceptance of the '96 pay rise. Members' disillusionment showed in the low poll which gave the CWU its "yes" vote to participate in "Joint Working Parties". These will deliver an inevitable fudge in April for our Union leadership to manipulate another "yes" vote if they can.

The dispute has shown the futility of trusting "left-leaning" officials on the National Executive and again reveals the importance of creating independent grass-roots organisation of activists. The issue of sacked and disciplined strikers has not been resolved - CWU leaders seem intent upon minimising action on their behalf.

• A SUCCESSFUL picket in Jan. by building workers in Northampton forced James King Associates to pay wages owed to 13 workers. Meanwhile local UCATT branch secretary Brian Higgins is being sued by UCATT official Hehir for exposing his failure to support 2 sacked building workers.

working on a chain gang NOT

ON 24 February the government announced that the new work for your dole scheme, Project Work, would be made compulsory UK-wide if they win the election. The same day 25 anti workfare demonstrators occupied Grand Met's Head Office in London, to oppose Grand Met's heavy involvement in Project Work.

On 27 Feb. Bury Job Centre was invaded by claimants chained together and dressed in convict gear. A megaphone appeared and the chain gang denounced slave labour and Project Work. When manager Norma Hart tried to intervene, claimant photographers chased her round the office.

A tidal wave of occupations has engulfed Job Centres in NW England. Salford, Bolton, Burnley and Bury, plus Rathbones Training Agency, were all invaded in February. In Burnley - where last year a young man hung himself after his benefit was stopped - demonstrators photographed a client adviser and manager Duffy.

Project Work must be stopped. Why should the unemployed be forced to slave, under threat of benefit cuts, for 13 weeks for benefit plus a tenner?

If workfare gets established employers will replace workers with conscripts off the dole. All workers are under threat.

The Tories are forcing Project Work (PW) on all unemployed over 2 years in 29 areas, including Edinburgh, Dundee, NE/E London, Bristol, Bolton / Bury, S. Tyneside, Bradford and Brighton, starting Feb./ April. Labour, too, have workfare plans, for under 25's.

How to stop Project Work?

- Actions/ occupations against Job Centres, PW Training Providers, and employers using PW conscripts
- Pressurising employers, Councils and charities to boycott PW - most charities boycotted the initial PW pilots in Kent and Humberside
- Workers pressurising their employers to boycott PW
- Benefit office workers not co-operating with PW
- Unemployed forced onto PW sabotaging equipment, making disastrous "mistakes" etc.
- Using "3 Strikes" demos and photographs to target those responsible for implementing PW

The Groundswell network of independent groups has called for Anti Project Work actions all over the UK on 2 April. Main targets are the rip-off Training Providers like Grand Met and Instant Muscle. Let's make the Project unworkable! Groundswell c/o Claimants Action Group, EOCC, Princes St., Oxford OX4 1HU. tel 01865 723750 (fax 724317).

• TWO years after the Council violently evicted our Broughton St Centre, the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh has found a new home! Help needed to create a base for organising resistance. ACE / Edinburgh Claimants, 17 W. Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA. 0131 557 6242 (info exchange with similar groups requested).

GET INVOLVED !

• Scottish contacts: **Glasgow Anarchist Alternatives** Solidarity Centre, 3 Royal Exchange Square, G1 3PA *(until May 2nd)* ; **Dundee Anarchists** 01382 814922; **The Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh / Edinburgh Claimants,** 17 West Montgomery Place, EH7 5HA 0131-557-6242 • **5th May Group POB 1687 London N8;.** • **Anarchist Black Cross**, c/o 121 Railton Rd.,London SE24 (prisoner solidarity) • **Anarchist Communist Federation**, 84b Whitechapel High St,London E1 7QX • **Angry People**, PO Box 108,St. Peters,NSW 2044 Australia • **Bad Attitude**, 121 Railton Road, London, SE24 Tel 0171-978 9057 • **Class War**:PO Box 772, Bristol BS99 1EL • **Collective Action Notes**, PO Box 22962, Balto., MD 21203, USA • **Contraflow**, 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17; fax: 0171-326-0353; email: contraflow@omega.comlink.de • **Education Worker Network**, Sol. Fed.-IWA, EWN, c/o PO Box 1681, London, N8 7LE • **E. Anglia Anarchist Network**, PO Box 87, Ipswich IP4 4JQ • **Federation Anarchiste**, 145 Rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France • **Frontline Collective and Organise** both at: PO Box 505, Belfast BT11 9EE, Ireland • **Haringey Solidarity Group**, Box 2474, London N8. 0181 802 9804 • **Industrial Workers of the World,** 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB • **Kate Sharpley Library,** BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX • **Kommunist Kranti**, Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India • **London Anarchist Forum** meet every Friday 8pm ,Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, Holborn;**London Greenpeace**, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 • **Norwich Solidarity Centre/Solidarity Fed.**: PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD • **Ratbag Infoshop** POB 126 cygnet 7/2,Tasmania, Australia • **SchNEWS**, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX; tel/fax: 01273-685913 (weekly news-sheet) • **Sheffield Anarchist Group**, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY • **Solidarity Fed - IWA**, PO Box 493, St. Albans, AL1 5TW • **South Bristol Anarchists**, PO Box 1076, Bristol, BS99 1WF • **Torpedo**, Milan Djuric,M. Velikog 12/10 11300 Smederevo, Serbia-Yugoslavia; Books/ Pamphlets:•**DS4A**, Box 8, 82 Colston St., Bristol; • **Active Distro**, BM Active, London WCIN 3XX • **AK Distribution**, PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE

COUNTER INFORMATION is produced by an independent collective, based in central Scotland. Our aim is to assist in the struggle against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. In Edinburgh drop into *A.C.E.*. For info on CI distro in the north of England - *CI, PO Box IIP 171, Leeds LS6 1XX*. We invite help with distribution and news-gathering. Contact us if you'd like to get involved. Donations are desperately needed - cheques/ postal orders to Counter Information. Stamps are always useful. CI is now on the World Wide Web. To access Http://home.virtual-pc.com/soapbar/counterinfo/CI.html

COUNTER INFORMATION, c/o TRANSMISSION, 28 KING ST., GLASGOW G1 5 QP, SCOTLAND. CI 48 went to press 10.3.97.

T/SOR/49/1/16

Non- Junk Mail flyer -Spring S.a.n./C.I.

Hi,

Here's the new Counter Information passing the milestone of 50 issues.If you want more copies or can donate, contact *.

CI now only comes out twice a year, partly coz of lack of funding & participation, partly coz we've linked up with the Solidarity news-sheet brought out by the Scottish anarchist network, which is supposed to be anythime of the year bar April and October when CI will now come out.

The new **Solidarity** was done by the A.C.E. people in Edinburgh. The only news 'short' submitted from Glasgow was 'held over' for space reasons. Now, even if it only reflects what we come across day-to-day ourselves we must have some news stories of struggle, humour or injustice.

Meetings at the moment are largely confined to those connected to **S.a.n.** [Glasgow], more of an affinity group but phoning me or Tommy would let you know - we're not going to hassle people about 'getting involved' ! The 'solidarity group' is 'on hold'! Treason is restarting.

See the encl. flyer for the **Bradford** event. It was hoped to run at least a carload leaving Glasgow early Friday 1st to get down to Bradford for the May Day march. Drivers needed, if enough people then a larger vehicle or two cars. Ph me, Keith * at 427-6398 or e. mail s.ungar@gcal.ac.uk or page 0336 754 257 via Simon [be discreet !]

Apart from the trip to Bradford, there are two meetings arranged following on from the meeting in the Vicky Bar when it was decided to hold back the next **'summer school**/celebration of anarchism' till May 1st 1999, on a three year cycle from 1993>1996>1999.

On **Tuesday May 5th** Billy Clark will lead a discussion on 'researching your enemy'. Streetlevel Gallery 26 King St. at 7.30pm. It is hoped to launch a 'research group';

On **Tuesday May 19th**, the first planning meeting for an International event/ bookfair planned for 3rd October 1998, will take place again, Streetlevel at 7.30pm.

On **Mon. 20th April** at 5.45pm "Bakunin's Son" will be screened at the GFT, Rose St.. Meet in Cafe Cosmo in GFT at 5.30pm - pay yourself in! Also as part of Italian Festival films on 'Red Brigade' era, check the programme.

aw' the best !

'Ad printouts' 8pm TUES 28th.
-spare table N.E. corner George Sq.

COUNTER INFORMATION

No 50 Spring/Summer 1998 Free/donation

A DUD DEAL

LABOUR are restructuring the welfare system to benefit the bosses to an extent that the Tories could only dream about. The New Deal attacks the entire working class. Resistance is vital.

Under 25's unemployed for over 6 months are forced to attend the"Gateway" interviews. They aim to find/pressurise 40% into an unsubsidised job.

All others will be forced into:

1) A low paid temporary six month job. The employer (private or public) gets £60 per week subsidy, and after 6 months can replace the New Dealers with more subsidised workers.

2) Working for a Voluntary Organisation for 6 months, paid benefits plus £15 per week.

3) Working on an Environmental Task Force for 6 months, for benefits plus £15 per week..

1 day per week training in the above 3 options.

4) Full time education. Mainly for those lacking NVQ level 2. Paid existing benefits.

5) Self employment.

Claimants who won't participate, or leave early, face having their JSA benefit cut completely for 2 weeks (4 weeks for a 2nd 'offence")

The details for over 24's unemployed for over 2 years (starts in June), single parents, and disabled are not yet clear. Compulsion is probable for the unemployed. Labour deny compulsion will hit single parents, but increasing harassment is likely. Ominously, the new Green Paper aims to cut the numbers on Incapacity Benefit.

WORKFARE

The New Deal

• brings the UK nearer to USA-type workfare - compulsory work for a boss for benefits for most unemployed and single parents and for many disabled people. New York City uses 75,000 workfare workers, intended to grow to over half its employees. They have cut over 20,000 unionised jobs.

• means more "casualisation" - 6 months temporary jobs undermining everyone's wages and conditions. Employers can use the temporary subsidised jobs to "filter out" activists

• aims to impose work discipline and state control. Instead of defying the bulldozers at road protests young unemployed people will be on the litter patrol in the Environmental Task force. They want to socialise people into the rat race - slaving for 50 years to pay for your funeral.

• furthers privatisation, with private companies like Reed running the New Deal in Hackney, London.

RESISTANCE

Resistance is needed at all levels.

During the Gateway process claimants should take someone with them to all interviews.

Even if forced onto the new Deal, "New Dealers" can still resist. When the Employment Training scheme operated around1988-90 several ET workers groups sprang up and some successful strikes were held (see CI 25 etc). From July - December 1996 New York workfare workers held over 30 demos demanding proper wages and work benefits.

CONT. BACK PAGE COLUMN 1

50 not out

OVER 13 years & Counter Info has staggered to issue 50.

Yet, for an initiative designed to implode with the end of the miners strike that isn't bad going. But then as the miners were being bludgeoned by the state & its law, first hand riot reports flooded in from Handsworth & Brixton, the Wapping dispute gave a new meaning to the term, news international. A momentum had grown, and a 'long march' through the minefield of struggles and autonomous action had commenced, peaking during the anti-poll tax movement.

CI, despite its welcome receipt of reports from all over the world, from claimants to tree-dwellers, has remained centred in central Scotland. The myth is that it has attracted a fabulous and dedicated team of 'cub' reporters, skilled in the arts of desktop publishing & incisive prose. Well, we don't want to dispel the mythology attached to CI, too much. Let's just say, we acquired the art of the 'pritt stick' just in time the new Mac era while still managing to cram over 4,000 words per issue.

In an age when politicos in Scotland and elsewhere have been pushing national self-determination, we remain sceptical, critical and internationalist. We hold to the 'big picture' of capitalism, but this is often illustrated by local struggles. As for another 50, maybe not, but we are committed to co-operating with likewise initiatives, globally.

ENERGY is growing for the 16 May global day of Reclaim the Streets parties. As the G8 world leaders meet in Birmingham that day, people world-wide will be banishing the car, dancing defiantly, transforming private space and creating a world wide web of festivals of resistance. ***Reclaim the Streets, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY. 0171 281 4621***

Why Work?

IN THE 1930's Nazis would have you believe work made you free. Religion praises the work ethic as akin to a cleansing of the soul, and present day bosses and politicians hype work as the salvation of the nation, bringing dignity and prosperity to the masses.

Work as we know it under capitalism is nothing short of repetitive, routine, disciplined long hours, low pay and is usually boring. There are clear cut times for workers to work, to play, and to rest. Work it appears is apart *from* our lives. It is something we do because we have to, not because we want to.

Work as we see it need not be seperate from our lives but should be a part *of* it. It should not involve working long hours, day after day at the same thing. It should involve learning, time to play, should not have limited goals. It should be expansive and of interest. Not all work is going to be enjoyable but unenjoyable work should not last a lifetime!

The world's resources belong to everyone. With a system of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation, with no bosses and no profit motive, work could become satisfying and maybe even enjoyable! Capitalism has stolen our humanity and individual self-worth, maybe it is time to steal it back.

No Hiding place for Multinationals

MID MAY is M.A.I. day for the multinational corporations. With the signing of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, the global economy will relegate 'national sovereignty to the dustbin of history.

Over the past 30 months, organised by the O.E.C.D.m the 29 wealthiest countries have drawn up new rules to penalise restrictions placed in the way of the huge multinational corporations. It will effectively "invalidate all international and domestic law regarding environmental, social and labour rights. Countries will not be able to opt out once it is signed,: for 20 years [Schnews* 31-10-97].

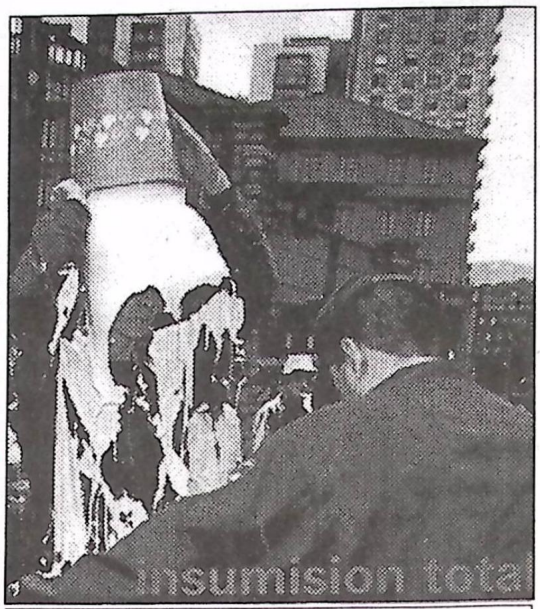
All the leftist and national liberation lobbying for 'regulation' by "their" Scots parliament or 'peoples' government will be rendered useless. Multinationals will gain the right to sue national governments for even debating issues which could harm their profit and investments. More favourable 'worker protection', public safety and environmental safeguard legislation will be abandoned. The alternative is to risk a flight of investment, as the multinationals gang up, and recession.

The trade agreement in North America has shown what will happen. The Canadian Government was sued by the Ethyl Corporation for $367 million for banning the use of the pollutant gasoline additive, MMT [Schnews*]. What's more, president Clinton's recent trip to Africa underlined that in the new era of economic 'liberalisation', what aid that is dispensed will be tied to removing trade restrictions, with countries that are 'self sufficient' going the way of North Korea.

MOODY BLUES

Global resistance can undermine this 'real domination of capital'. On Ist February international action took place in Columbia, Mexico, Haiti, Spain, Ireland, Germany and South Korea. Schnews [6-2-98] reported that the grounds of the home of Moody- Stuart, Group Managing Director of Royal Dutch Shell in Hassocks, Sussex , was invaded. It illustrated that those with real power can be made 'visible' to protest. On Feb. 23rd activists linked to the People's Global Action met to co-ordinate resistance. Protests are planned at the House of Commons on May 13th and a global street party on Sat. 16th May is planned around a People's Summit in Birmingham against the G8 world leaders meeting [info 0121-632-6909].

Resistance, however, will be futile if it is based around demands for 'national sovereignty'. As the President of the 10 million strong peasant movement put it "MAI is the final consummation of collective colonialism.." - only an international outlook linking 'protest from below' can now challenge capitalism.



picture from:*Insumision total*, a pamphlet from People like Us at BM Box PLUP London WC1 3XX for £2 about anti-militarism in Spain and the Basque country.

In your face - symbolically

THE PUBLICITY generated by John Prescott's 'icing' at the Brit awards courtesy of Chumbawamba's Danbert Nobocon may have dried up, but companies such Polygram continue to pay £3 a hour for 12 hours packing their CDs.

Meanwhile, a spate of oven-baked 'terra-ism' has been reviving, with a certain John Peppar of Proctor & Gamble, getting spiced up with a pie in his face at another awards ceremony! In Brussels, Microsoft monopolist, Bill Gates went 'java' after his pieing by the 30 strong, international brigade - patisserie, who stated "we are commercial terrorists and the pie is symbolic. The victim is only injured in his self-esteem ". Pie today, expropriation tomorrow !

STATE STITCH UP

GREAT NEWS! The Gandalf Three were freed on bail on 27 March, pending their appeal. The 3 editors of Green Anarchist magazine had been jailed in November for 3 years each. They were found guilty of "conspiracy to incite persons unknown to commit criminal damage", because of articles in Green Anarchist.

Meanwhile, the trial on the same charges of Robin Webb, and possibly Paul Rogers, starts on 27 April at Portsmouth. A demo is scheduled for outside the court on the first day.

CI disagrees with Green Anarchist's tendency to dismiss class struggle. But it is vitally important to resist state censorship of the radical press. We urge our readers to support the growing solidarity movement by contacting London Gandalf Support Campaign, c/o London Greenpeace, Panther House, 38 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X OAP E mail lgp@envirolink.org

SOCIAL INJUSTICE

AFTER 28 months of industrial action, the Liverpool Dockers have settled their dispute with Mersey Docks and Harbour Company (MDHC) due to the enormous odds stacked against them by the British Labour Government and the leaders of the Dockers' own union - the TGWU.

Although the British Government is the main shareholder in MDHC they refused to intervene in the dispute and even local Labour MPs wouldn't discuss the issue. More damaging but just as predictable was the behaviour of the TGWU who undermined the entire dispute by their lack of support. This included their refusal to launch a national campaign challenging the dismissals and paying only £13 per week strike pay per Docker . The leader of the TGWU, Bill Morris, showed his true self when he said that the dockers' supporters 'with their message of false hope to the dockers and their families, did more than anyone to prolong the agony.'

The Dockers have pledged to fight on against Social Injustice, calling a national march in London for May 30th and are still publishing their paper. The lessons of this dispute could not be clearer - governments govern and unions act as a go between to balance the status quo of captalism - and the needs of the working class are unimportant to either..Dockers Charter c/o 19 Scorton St., Liverpool L6 4AS 0151 207 3388

FUKKK OFF

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, USA.(Oct97) A Ku Klux Klan rally was successfully attacked by anti-racists. The Klan were pelted with stones, bricks, and eggs. Local black youth "confiscated" and burned the Klan`s confederate flags. Despite police and SWAT team protection the Klan had to retreat. They *missed the opportunity* to enjoy the Radical Fairies kiss-in and other acts of solidarity among the anti-racists.

SPECIFIC STRIKE

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PEOPLE AGAINST the Monarchy has been formed to organise popular opposition to the Royal Family, particularly during the Queens official visit to Scotland at the end of June. P.A.M. not only oppose the rule of the Royals but want all rulers overthrown *Info.* PAM PO Box 1021, Edinburgh EH8 9PW.

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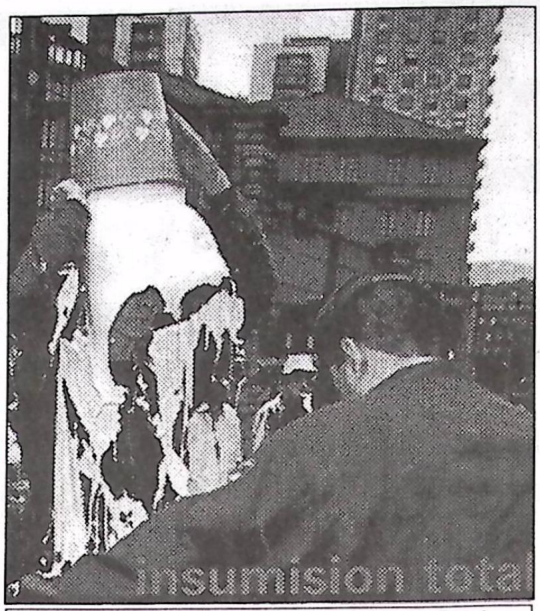

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A WORLD TO WIN

KNOCK OUT?

JAN. 1998 in Usedom, Germany saw 15 Nazi Skinheads attack a group of black people in a local billiard hall, little knowing they were a visiting group of boxers from Cuba. Result- two knock outs for Cuba -without reply!

GLAD TO BE GREY

THE PENSIONERS Rights Campaign who campaign against discrimination on the grounds of age and for better pensions, recently (Dec 97) took over a TV studio, got air time, and also blockaded the Humber Bridge to highlight their campaign. A spokesperson said; "We don`t want to go and stand in Hyde Park and talk... because direct action is the only way to get anywhere."

ZAPATA!!

MEXICO CITY, Mexico. Jan, 1998 saw protesters occupy two radio stations and blockade the stock exchange. They also threw red paint on the outside walls, and demanded that a Zapatista tape be played. This was followed by placing symbolic coffins in the street to highlight the recent deaths of 45 people murdered by death squads in the Chiapas region of Mexico. Mexican embassies in Canada, the USA, and several European countries were picketed in solidarity actions. In the Chiapas region itself 6000 marched in protest.

FOOD AND BOMBS

VIOLENT RIOTS followed recent price increases in food in Zimbabwe. Poor families living in Harare, Gweru, and Masingo continue to riot despite troops being told to shoot to kill. Government greed and corruption is being blamed for the price increases. The Government is blaming white farmers and the International Monetary Fund.

SOLIDARITY.

OVER 17,000 workers voted to unionise in New York, USA. (Jan.98) They have been put on compulsory Work Fare Schemes and the City authorities fail to recognise them as workers. Typically working 20 hrs a week for welfare benefits and do not have any work place protection.

NO NUKES-GOOD NEWS

ANTI-NUCLEAR movement protesters and residents of Ahaus, Germany mobilise 5,000 people against a train laden with nuclear material.(2 Mar 98) The train was held up for over 13 hrs despite the presence of 30,000 police, riot squads, border guards, and anti-terrorist units. Many clashes took place with police cars smashed up and 700 arrested. The 21 March saw a rally in Munster, near Ahaus, protest against the nuclear shipment and police violence.

Magnet Boss turns chicken !

18 MONTHS INTO their dispute, the strikers from Magnet Kitchens in Darlington have taken industrial action to new heights, by opening up a chicken farm near the ú1.5m Cambridgeshire mansion of Alan Bowkett, chief executive of Magnet's parent company Berisford. Aided by redundant Derbyshire miners, the Magnet strikers are now able to hold demonstrations near Bowkett's palatial home while evading threats of legal action for unlawful secondary picketing. The farm has been renamed 'Camp Bowkett', after the fat cat who last year received a ú124,000 pay rise. The Magnet dispute began in September 1996 when 350 workers seeking a 3% pay increase after 3 years of pay freezes, were sacked, many after 30 and 40 years' service. Management at Magnet refuse to negotiate a settlement.

The Magnet strikers are calling on activists to organise demonstrations and boycotts of over 130 companies owned by Berisford. As well as Magnet Kitchen showrooms in a large number of British cities, the company also owns Welbilt Holdings based in the USA and throughout Europe. Details of Welbilt in the US, can be found on the company web pages http://www.welbilt.com. For more information on the campaign, contact Ian Crammond, 109 Jedburgh Drive, Darlington DL3

THE DIE WAS CAST

SINCE THE end of the miners strike in 1985, 140 deep pits have closed and 90% of the workforce has been made redundant. Opencast coal production has tripled over this period, now accounting for a third of production, and coal imports have grown dramatically.

Secure, skilled jobs have been replaced with low pay, casual employment and the dole queue; sacrificing health and safety for cheap coal and quick profits.

DEVASTATED

In opencast mining, whole landscapes are dug out, sometimes to a depth of hundreds feet. Entire ecosystems are decimated, water polluted and local people subjected to unbearable levels of noise, traffic and air pollution. A study of children in West Glamorgan, Wales, has concluded that there is a link between opencast mining and childhood asthma.

Many of the opencast mining companies have been criticised over health and safety standards on their sites and are hostile to trade unions. The circumstances which lead to the death of one worker and 16 others being injured at the Scottish Dalquhandy pit in February 1998 are typical of other sites.

DOE HILL ACTION

In opposition, New Labour pretended to be critical of open cast, but their review of open cast mining policy published in October 1997 was described by environmental organisations as " weak and insubstantial". No surprises there then! Publication of the report coincided with a day of action by Earth First! and No Opencast who organised the occupation of Doe Hill House opencast mine in Derbyshire, when the earth destroying equipment and machinery was wrecked. They later occupied the offices of mining company H J Banks who operate the site, when there were 47 arrests.

Contact No Opencast, 190 Shepherds Bush Rd., London W6 7NL 0181 767 3142

THE CORRUPT WEB

BRAZIL IS a country with a feudal division of wealth and land. Today less than 3% of the population owns almost two thirds of Brazilian farmland. 60% of that lies unused. Despite president Carduso's electoral promises little has changed since the 1980's. A corrupt web of the interlinked interests of big business, big landowners, the military and police combat attempts at social reform.

In 1985 a small group of desperate peasants squatted unused plantation land and fended of armed attacks by police and hired gunmen for two years. The government then granted the land for use as farm co-op. This year the co-op is expected to make $12 million for its 1,432 workers.

Since then a massive movement of landless peasants and workers has swelled into existence. In 1997 60,000 marched over 1000km for two months arriving in Brasilia (the capital) to demand land reform and mark the anniversary of the massacre of El Dorado dos Carajas where 19 people occupying a hacienda were killed by the military police. In the last ten years over 960 peasants and supporters have been killed in land disputes.

200,000 landless families have successfully taken back 7 million hectares of land. More than 50,000 families are currently camped around empty land. MST (Movement of Landless Workers) has inspired urban homeless to begin occupations of unused buildings. MST spokespeople speaking on their national pirate radio emphasis that "the poor can't hope for government action but have to organise themselves."

LOCKING ON

Faslane peace Camp are committed to resist the eviction from Argyll & Bute Council. Since 28th July '97 they have been classed as squatters. Send support/donations via 01436 820901. Also get their "nuke-just don't do it" T.Shirt for £6 !

Like our new masthead ? Interested in a graphics collective ? drawings for your zine ? artists/cartoonists get in touch via Jon at *Anarchist Graphics* Box 5, 167 Fawcett Rd., Southsea, Hants PO4 0DH

FORMIDABLE!!!

A MASSIVE wave of direct action by unemployed people demanding increases in benefits has swept France.

Since Marseille benefit offices were occupied in December, over 200 Job Centres, Town Halls, Electricity Company offices, police stations!, Chambers of Commerce, banks, Socialist Party offices, and other buildings have been taken over by unemployed demonstrators.

Some occupations have lasted several days. On 17 January alone there were 20 new occupations, including Town Halls in Grenoble, Brest, Guingamp, a Socialist Party office in Mulhouse, EDF electricity offices in Paris and Clermont-Ferrand, plus occupations in Nancy and Lyon. On 10 February protestors occupied the Police HQ at av Daumesnil, Paris.

Large groups enter supermarkets and collectively take food and other goods without paying, to distribute free. Anti-baillif actions, blockading roads and railways, mass free use of public transport, invading posh restaurants and demanding free food, opening toll gates on pay motorways are among other activities.

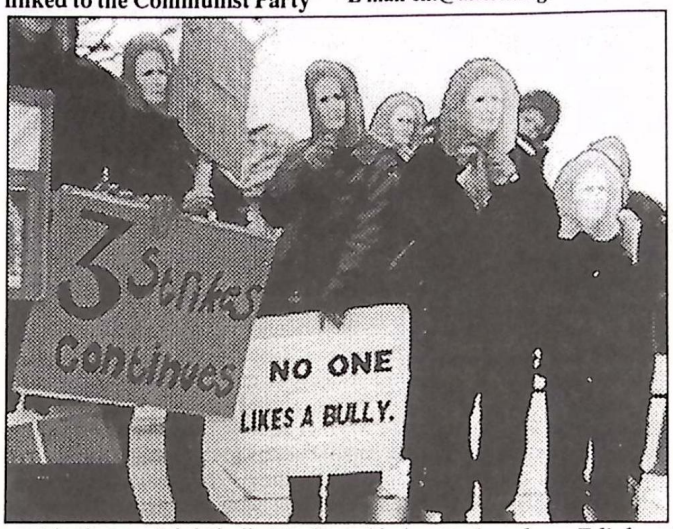
The government has conceded some benefit increases, but has not met the main demands, eg extending benefits to 19-25 year olds. Police have evicted many occupations. 4 demonstrators arrested at British-owned Cash Converters in Paris on 11 Feb. were jailed for 2 weeks while awaiting trial.

Some urge the struggle go beyond the reformist limits imposed by the Unemployed Associations like AC! and groups linked to the Communist Party Trade Union, the CGT.

"We have no reason to stop the struggle....It's up to us to take back the resources that those who hold political, financial and media power have stolen from us : let's take back everything!"-TCP.

Since 19 January such activists have intitiated daily general assemblies in Paris, attracting around 100 people, to bring together all involved in the struggle, and plan weekly actions.

Info Travailleurs/euses, Chomeurs/euses, Precaires en colere (TCP), 21ter, rue Voltaire, 75011 Paris. Fax 01 43 72 15 77 & CNT-AIT, 33 rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris. Tel 01 43 72 09 54 http://www.altern.com/cnt/ E mail cnt@altern.org.



Demonstrators wearing masks with photos of dole bully MacDonald about to invade an Edinburgh benefit office on 11 February

YOU'RE OUT!

STAFF in High Riggs Job Centre in Edinburgh were astounded when 20 people looking exactly like their colleague Marianne MacDonald stormed into the office on 11 February. Perhaps the Employment Service were emulating the cloning of Dolly the Sheep?

But why were the 20 versions of the notorious bullying Restart interviewer waving placards proclaiming *3 STRIKES CONTINUES, NO BENEFIT CUTS FOR SINGLE PARENTS,* and *THE NEW DEAL IS A DIRTY DEAL?*

Elementary. It was an Edinburgh Claimants 3rd strike demo against MacDonald and her manager Mr Laird. Despite 2 warnings she had continued abusing claimants. So now her photo was adorning the demonstrators' masks and hundreds of leaflets.

This action defied a legal clampdown. That morning in Edinburgh a claimant had been sentenced to 150 hours community service for delivering a 3 Strikes warning letter. **"We won't be intimidated"** say Edinburgh Claimants. *Ring 0131 557 6242*

A DUD DEAL

from page one

Independent claimants groups, run by and for claimants and based on solidarity and direct action, can spark opposition to the New Deal. The Groundswell Network is a good start which needs to grow much bigger.

The New Deal is not just a "claimants issue". Workers in jobs must get involved in opposition. The Liverpool dockers and postal workers for example have fought fierce battles recently over casualisation. Workers could insist that all New Deal jobs pay the going rate, and be permanent (not for 6 months). While this would be something, it still leaves intact the imposition of a compulsory scheme. Enforcing a boycott of all New Deal options should be the aim, difficult though workplace opposition will be - the Trade Union hierarchy completely back the scheme. The need for independent workers organisation is greater than ever.

Claimants groups, and Workers and volunteers in voluntary organisations, need to encourage/ pressurise voluntary organisations to boycott the New Deal, stressing that participation in a compulsory forced labour scheme contradicts avowed voluntary sector values.

DEAD TOAD HITS BACK

Recent resistance to the compulsory slave labour scheme Project Work (PW) should inspire opposition to the New Deal

Bristol Claimants report that anti PW action late last year included • Musicians playing **inside the Job Centre.** • Job Centre and Job Club windows smashed 3 times • Deer fence and dry stone wall built by PW slave labour both destroyed • PW provider Instant Muscle suffering - an invasion by a Welsh choir - a boss covered with red dye - a dead toad in their mail. • Stencilled slogans on windows of charity shops using PW - **THIS CHARITY USES SLAVE LABOUR.**

In Brighton active opposition from led to 6 organisations withdrawing from PW. On 6 Feb. 30 antiPW protesters pushed past police into David Lepper MPs surgery in the Brighthelm Centre, a PW exploiter. This so worried Brighthelm that they pulled out of Project Work.

Groundswell c/o Claimants Action,, E.Oxford Community Centre, Princes St., Oxford. 01865 723750. Groups in Bristol, Oxford, Brighton, London, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester area, Blackburn, Edinburgh, etc.. Next conference 13-14 June, Oxford.

GET INVOLVED !

• Scottish anarchist network contacts: **Solidarity** news-sheet [send SAE]to c/o Box A, Fahrenheit 451 bookshop, Virginia Galleries, Virginia St., Glasgow G1. anarcho@geocities.com *or to* **The Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh / Edinburgh Claimants,** 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA 0131-557-6242 ace@punk.org.uk http://wkweb4.cableinet.co.uk/bunnyace/ace/ [Dundee/Dunfermline/Aberdeen @s via ACE] • **5th May group POB 1681 London N8 7LE;.** • **Anarchist Black Cross,** c/o 121 Railton Rd., London SE24 (prisoner solidarity)• **Anarchist Communist Federation,** 84b Whitechapel High St,London E1 7QX • **Angry People,** PO Box 108,St. Peters,NSW 2044 Australia • **Collective Action Notes,** PO Box 22962, Balto., MD 21203, USA • **Contraflow,** 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17 "contraflow-london@omega.berlin-net.de" http://www.gn.apc.org/gridlock • **Education Worker Network,** PO Box 1681, London, N8 7LE • **E. Anglia Anarchist Network,** PO Box 87, Ipswich IP4 4JQ • **Federation Anarchiste,** 145 Rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France • **Frontline Collective and Organise** both at: PO Box 505, Belfast BT11 9EE, Ireland • **Haringey Solidarity Group,** Box 2474, London N8. 0181 802 9804 • **Industrial Workers of the World,** 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB • **Kate Sharpley Library,** BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX • **Kommunist Kranti,** Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India • **London Anarchist Forum** meet every Friday 8pm ,Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, Holborn;**London Greenpeace,** 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 • **Norwich Solidarity Centre/Solidarity Fed.:** Solidarity Centre, Room 13, Muspole Workshops, Norwich NR3 1QD • **SchNEWS,** PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX; tel/fax: 01273-685913 schnews@brighton.co.uk http://www.cbuzz.co.uk (weekly news-sheet) • **Sheffield Anarchist Group,** PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY • **Solidarity Fed - IWA,** PO Box 493, St. Albans, AL1 5TW • **S.Bristol Anarchists,** PO Box 1076,Bristol BS99 1WF Books/Pamphlets:• **Active Distro,** BM Active, London WCIN 3XX • **AK Distro,** PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE *MAYDAY98 CONFERENCE* **Bradford 1-4 May - POBox HH57, Leeds LS8 5XG**

COUNTER INFORMATION is produced by an independent collective, based in central Scotland, including Edinburgh. Our aim is to assist in the struggle against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. For info on CI distro in the north of England write CI, PO Box HP 171, Leeds LS6 1XX. We invite help with distribution and news-gathering. Contact us if you'd like to get involved. Donations needed - cheques/ po's to Counter Information. Stamps v. useful. COUNTER INFORMATION, c/o TRANSMISSION, 28 KING ST., GLASGOW G1 5 QP, SCOTLAND. tel 0131 557 6242 (leave message for CI) WEB http://wkweb4.cableinet.co.uk/muirhse/counterinfo/ E mail counterinfo@cableinet.co.uk or counterinfo@punk.org.uk CI 50 went to press 6 April 1998.

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COUNTER INFORMATION

No. 55 Winter 2000/2001

FOR A WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS

FOR CENTURIES, Brits have emigrated for many reasons. Though often 'economic refugees', they were allowed into Australia, the US, and all over Europe. Refugees fleeing severe economic, racial or political trouble do not receive the same welcome here, although since World War 2, migration out of Britain has been consistently higher than the numbers wanting to settle.

Economic/racial/political motives are always intertwined. People should have the right to relocate without their motives being questioned.

In July, thousands of Eastern European gypsies were judged to have no right to asylum in the UK. This was based on the case of an asylum seeker whose father was beaten to death, his brother attacked and his home ransacked. The Slovakian police did nothing. The right to seek asylum is only granted if the applicant's own state can't or won't protect its people. For the British Government, acknowledging that this is the case in Slovakia would harm international relations. It would also leave their own police and judiciary open to criticism, especially after e.g. the Stephen Lawrence case.

Restrictive immigration policy opens the way for illegal traffic in refugees, whereby criminals profit and asylum seekers die in the backs of lorries.

The Home Office's agency, the Asylum Support Service, has issued contracts to scumbag landlords to house refugees. Home Office and landlords maintain secrecy about the cost of housing and circumstances in the buildings. Resident refugees are threatened if they talk to the press, thrown out if they complain. Landlords make huge profits on accomodation that was deemed unacceptable for British citizens and is often damp, overcrowded and in sink estates where no doctors or other facilities are available. Ironically, 2000 fully trained doctors are amongst Asylum Seekers who are not allowed to work in Britain.

In the detention centres, people are held without charge, without time limit, without decent access to legal representation. These are breaches of internationally recognised human rights.

RESISTANCE

In March, action at Campsfield detention centre resulted in expensive damage to the prison's electricity supply. Campsfield houses around 200 men, mostly political refugees. It is run for profit by Group 4 on behalf of the Immigration Service.

Harmondsworth Det[illegible] Cen[illegible] (capacity 95 detainees), conveniently just outside Heathrow Airport, on 15 July. Protesters climbed the fence and made contact with the refugees and a group of 12 visited refugees the next day. If you know the name of an asylum seeker inside, guards have to let you visit. Visitors are an important source of legal information and moral support for asylum seekers.

Direct action at airports has succesfully prevented several deportations. Following French examples, on 18 July the anti-prison group CAGE leafletted passengers about to board a flight deporting a Zairean refugee. One passenger was arrested for standing up and refusing to let the flight depart. Eventually the refugee was removed from the flight at the pilot's demand. A second deportation, of Kurdish regugee Amanj Gafor, was cancelled when the Home Office heard of planned resistance. Similar actions in Belgium have led to airlines refusing to deport asylum seekers altogether.

As British Airways are still making profits on the backs of asylum seekers, demonstrations

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Demonstrators scale the fence at Harmondsworth Detention Centre on 15 July (photo CARF)

STILL BURNING A NEW WORLD ORDER

ESTIMATED CROWDS of 15,000 to 20,000 people filled the streets of Prague and besieged the fortressed meeting of the IMF and the World Bank on 26 September.

Many were prevented from entering the Czech Republic at the border. 400 of the Italian collective 'Ya basta' and other activists were told their chartered train couldn't enter unless 4 people blacklisted by the FBI for their involvement with Seattle protests got off. In solidarity everyone refused this and the train moved through.

Although there was a generalised focus on opposing the economic brutality of the IMF protest motivations and tactics were varied. INPEG (a group who did much organising for the day of action) declared "We do not support the initiation of any violence against people animals or property. At the same time we support citizens democratic rights to demonstrate. We oppose any measures taken by any authorities to prevent people from exercising this right."

This contrasts with the actions of KRRS (Karnataka state Farmer's Movement) in India who have destroyed a Cargill seed unit with iron bars, burned Monsanto's fields of bio-tech cotton and trashed a Cargill office and a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet. It also contrasts with the armed struggle of other communities across the world. Reformist organisations claims of acting in allegiance with non-western and other liberation struggles can be a rip-off.

Medha Patkar, an organiser in the Narmada Bachao Andolan (movement against the flooding of the Narmada Valley), says "The context of developed and developing countries is different. Those who are for reforms (will) realise over a period of time that these institutions are beyond reform. ... We're against the whole capitalist system." And so were plenty on the day of action!

TACTICS

People met beforehand in the INPEG organised convergence centre where people held mass meetings discussing tactics. People formed affinity groups to look out for each other. As a whole the gathering also divided into blue, yellow and pink blocks taking different directions (and suprising the police) on the day.

As the massed ranks of 11,000 riot police clashed with all sections of the march gas-masked, body-padded, helmeted (or not) protestors in the blue and yellow sections (mainly anarchist) pushed back the police, scaling fences and seizing batons and helmets from the police. Stones and molotov cocktails were flung with some police set alight. It looked as if the meeting might be stormed until police reinforcements arrived. Police used gas, water cannons, armed personnel carriers and brutality.

Conference delegates were reported to be alarmed and agitated as they struggled to hear each other above the firing. Delegates were successfully blockaded in their hotels and an opera event was cancelled.

Over 859 people were arrested and subjected to varying degrees of police terror whilst imprisoned. People were bruised, had bones and teeth broken, denied

CONTINUED BACK PAGE COL 1

World to Win

LILLE ALIGHT

After the unprovoked police killing of Riad Hamlaoui in Lille, France on 18 April riots erupted in working class suburbs with attempts to set two police stations alight.

WOODEN SPOON

Mexico City women celebrated international housework day by 'downing tools' and banging wooden spoons on pots and pans in street demos involving employees, housewives and some of the 1.7 million domestic maids to Mexico's upper class.

DAM BEATTY

Campaigners are opposing the eviction of 25,000 people in Kurdish Turkey to make way for the Ilisu Dam, funded potentially by £200 million British Government money. 50 activists stripped off to their T shirts at Balfour Beatty's AGM in May and were evicted by Group 4 heavies.

COMPANY POLICY

The Rio Tinto Zinc AGM was disrupted on 12 May by protesters highlighting the destruction of the Kelian community in Indonesia [partizans@gn.apc.org]

MAST MENACE

Residents at Burnage, Manchester have successfully taken direct action against an Orange mast near their homes [Direct Action 15 &16]

FREE FOR ALL

Railway passengers took direct action for "free transport for all" near Lyon,France on 6 May. 20 travelled Lyon-Chambery for free, a picnic was held in Chambery station, and a train was blockaded. (Combat Syndicaliste,CNT)

AULD REEKIE RECLAIMED

1000 people defied police and reclaimed streets all over Edinburgh city centre - including Princes St. - for over 4 hours on 17 June. www.reshape.org.uk/

ENJOYMENT ZONE

Unemployed people took over a Labour Party office and transformed it into an Enjoyment Zone as part of the 23 March European Day of Action against Workfare. BBAG, Box 77, 82 Colston St., Bristol.

GAY PRIDE DEFIES POPE

200,000 marched in Rome on 8 July for the World Gay Pride festival. Gays and straights together defied Vatican attempts to stop the event.

SELECT PARTICIPATION

1,000 rioted against repressive Quebec City police 'protecting' a meeting of Parti Quebecois politicians and hand-picked youth in Feb..

BIASED BAMS BARRACKED

Claimants picketed the BMA AGM on 26 June to oppose their collusion with Doctors participating in the Medical Services examinations, which are biased to deny claimants disability benefits. In March demonstrators beseiged Brighton MS ,after they refused benefits to Jack Watson, despite his suffering two heart attacks. (Incapacity Action 01227 276159 Brighton Against Benefit Cuts 01273 540717. BAMS leaflet from Edinburgh Claimants - see p4)

DEATH COMES RIDING ON A HORSE OF DOLLARS

BILL CLINTON'S visit to Cartagena (Colombia) on 31 August, to seal Plan Colombia, lead thousands of students, workers, indigenous communities and other people to take over the streets to demonstrate and strike against the new measures of the Plan.

Plan Colombia in fact includes, as one of its strategies, a military component that not only fails to resolve the narco-traffic problem, but also endangers the efforts to build peace, increases illicit crop production, violates the Amazon ecosystem, aggravates the humanitarian and human rights crisis, multiplies the problem of forced displacement, and worsens the social crisis with fiscal adjustment policies. In its social component, the Plan is limited to attending to some of the tangential causes and effects of the conflict.

In early August 700,000 people struck against the austerity measures and record unemployment imposed by the Colombian government. 15,000 workers marched through the capital Bogotá.

On 29 August dozens of students forced their way into the main offices of the five-countries Andean Parliament in Bogotá where they detained 20 employees plus, Ruben Velez Nunez, Ecuadorian legislator and parliamentary secretary-general.

On 31 August thousands of workers joined the students of the National University of Bogotá. During the street battles between students, workers and police, 3 people were murdered and many injured. In other main cities of the country similar events took place.

At the beginning of September, anti-riot police went to the U'wa community in Cubara to evict all civilians present in a 500 metre radius surrounding the exploratory well site of Gibraltar. The purpose of this eviction is to help Occidental Petroleum bring machinery to the new drill site. On 22 September the Colombian Embassy in London was picketed in solidarity with the U'wa people.

On 16 Sept. paramilitaries murdered 4 and kidnapped 16 people from the Embera-Katio indigenous community.

BOLIVIA'S BURNING

THE CORRUPT politics of the Bolivian government meets the interests of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, but imposes austerity on the Bolivian people, eg through the new Water Tax.

This has triggered spontaneous workers and peasants direct actions, without the direction of any party or union. Groups of peasants have destroyed a coffee field and factory, set offices of a Shell subsidiary on fire after an oil leakage damaged the peasants' field, and taken over a local Council office.

In April the government imposed martial law. Police carried out raids all around the country. 55 peasants were kidnapped and tortured by the army. The army occupied Sucre University. 5 people were murdered by state forces and 35 shot and wounded.

INSIDE INFO

MARK BARNSLEY

IN 1994 Mark Barnsley was fitted-up with a 12 year prison sentence for defending himself after being attacked and beaten up by 15 drunken students. He has fought this injustice for more than 6 years, rather than keep quiet and go for parole. Mark had a long previous history of radical political activism, which had made him the target of police harassment in the past. Prison authorities have treated him with brutality and harassment, constantly moving him from prison to prison. For more info and details of a new booklet about Mark's case contact: Justice for M. Barnsley-PO Box 381, Huddersfield, HD1 3XX, UK or barnsleycampaign@hotmail.com Mark's new address: Mark Barnsley WA2897, HMP Frankland, Brasside, Durham, DH1 5YD

LEONARD PELTIER

LEONARD PELTIER, a Native American activist, was jailed 24 years ago for the murders of two FBI agents, even though there was absolutely no proof of his guilt. A United States Parole Commission Examiner, who refused to read a medical report on Leonard's health, denied Leonard's application for parole last June 12th. The report showed that Leonard's health is deteriorating and has been not treated appropriately by prison medical staff. For more info, www.lpsg.co.org

SPANISH PRISONS

EARLY THIS year Spanish prisoners at the "FIES" isolation units had co-ordinated actions inside and outside the prisons to demand their rights. Prisoners were denied entry to the prison courtyard, beaten up with steel bars, left naked and handcuffed to their bed for days and their correspondence interfered with. The actions taken by the Prisoners went from distributing propaganda to hunger strikes. Support groups have been very active especially in Barcelona. More info contact, AAPEL, Blasco Garai, 2 – 08004 Barcelona, Spain.

MUMIA MUST LIVE!

JUDGE JOHN who will be hearing Mumia's appeal in the federal court, officially refused to accept into the court record all four of the amicus briefs filed in support of Mumia's defence. There is now a "Writ of Mandamus" to demand that Judge John accept the briefs. Contact the legal observers at 651-649-4579(US) or download a version from http://www.refuseandresist.org/mumia/091500joinder.pdf

For more info on Mumia contact International Concerned Family and Friends of MAJ, P.O. Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143 Contact Mumia at- Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, SCI-Greene, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburgh, PA 15370

Reporting on the Examiners

In Scotland in August controversy raged over the exam result fiasco. A school student in Scotland writes:

Thousands of students have been angered by the comedy of errors by the SQA, the quango responsible for Scottish exams. This has prompted some to call on the Minister of Education, Sam Galbraith, to resign and for the SQA to be made accountable - i.e. to those lackeys in the scottish Assembly.

But such criticisms ignore the nature of the exam system, and the whole compulsory schooling system of which it's part. The school system is a tool of capitalism, ensuring pupils are taught what will make them useful for business rather than what they need to know for themselves. You learn what *they* say is true, what *they* say is important - what will be in the exam - rather than what you feel you should know.

The exam system falsely exults the academic as somehow superior to other work. Those who fail this charlatan's test of merit are pushed towards a life of poverty whilst such punishment is justified under the lie that they just couldn't have worked hard enough at school. As one of those angry Higher students I would dearly love to see Mr. Galbraith go. However the most important thing is that I want to see a time when people learn and work for their own benefit, without want.

Bollards to Combe

Demonstrators active in support of the Terrace

RUTHLESS BUSINESSMAN William Combe has been trying for 18 months to operate a polluting illegal waste site in Gartocher Terrace in Glasgow's East End. He's backed by the might of Glasgow City Council and Strathclyde Police.

But the local residents refuse to give in, devising ever more ingenious methods of direct action to protect their and their children's health. In August residents constructed their own bollards in the street. These DIY traffic calming measures allowed cars to pass - but prevented the passage of Combe's big skip lorries.

The police and Council, ever eager to assist in the poisoning of the working class in the pursuit of profit, ordered the bollards be removed. The residents refused. After a week, the Council Roads Department ripped up the bollards.

On 17 August supporters of Gartocher residents distributed a leaflet outside a Glasgow City Council meeting asking some pertinent questions : "Why did Council Planning Committee Convenor Ronald Davey and Councillor Jim Coleman push through residential planning premission for a site that is obviously industrial?"

"Why did Council planning Department official Phil Gelthorpe warn Combe of a Council inspection of the site so that he could remove his skips? Why is Gelthorpe appearing as a character witness in a court case where Combe is charged with harassing a Gartocher Terrace resident?"

A blow of solidarity against Combe was struck when 150 participated in a moving street carnival through the local area on 27 May. Shettleston police station was beseiged, and demonstrators stormed Combe's Gartocher Terrace compound. Fencing was dismantled, the ventilation improved in his industrial units, and his CCTV cameras creatively redesigned with large stones.

Another mass action of support may soon be needed. In late September Combe was threatening that in early November he would bring in a 70 foot low loader artic with a 11 and a half foot wide JCB! A resident told us "He's no getting in - and that's it."

Contact 07979 836223. Write to The Residents, Gartocher Terrace,Glasgow G32 0HE

THE UPSTANDING REVOLT

To paraphrase: *never have so many watched so few do so little with such effect.*

A determined group of haulage contractors, backed by pressure groups such as *Farmers in Action* created the impression that an anti-Government rebellion was underway in September. Now a 60 day ultimatum threatens the Labour Government as the opportunist Tories rise in the polls.

The example of French Government capitulation to lorry drivers and farmers led to copy-cat actions in Britain, Belgium, Germany, Italy & elsewhere. The restriction in production by the oil-producing countries in OPEC, led to sharp rises in fuel.

The traffic go-slows gave way to blockades of the fuel depots. The haulage contractor demands for special dispensation for their industry and rural communities became intertwined with consumer resentment over indirect taxation policy.

'Mysteriously', the police who had mobilised against the miners in 1985, and now have much greater powers, found themselves 'unable' to protect tanker drivers against 'intimidation'. Faced with the complicity of Oil companies dragging their feet, and instructing their tanker drivers not to venture out, police inaction and a concerted media campaign, the Government was made to look powerless.

Eventually, as the conspiracy became clearer the Government highlighted the effects on the health service. Passive support from motorists began to evaporate and the the supply was resumed with blockades suspended . The Oil companies, appearing largely blameless up till then, then hiked up the price of fuel !

The media portrayed the event as an orderly crisis led by upstanding citizens. The rebellion was framed totally in terms of the *National Interest* as consumers and the interests of business. With 'the silent majority' adopting the narrow focus as 'motorists', environmental imperatives such as controlling greenhouse emissions, and promoting efficient public transport to reduce vehicle usage have been set back.

It is appealing to witness Blair & Brown's yuppie Government in disarray. But direct action within a framework of Nationalism and small business interests, works to the detriment of class consciousness. It undermines an awareness that the planet's climate and environment is being steadily destroyed by allegiance to selfish, profit-driven blinkered motives.

World to Win

NO SWEAT!

During the Democratic Party Convention in Los Angeles on 17th August thousands of local residents and workers joined anarchists in a march through the garment district where workers cheered from upper-storey windows. The march was then joined by antimilitarist protesters against the U.S. Navy bombing of Vieques in Puerto Rico.

DINO DIRECT

Demonstrators dressed as dinosaurs cycled through Calgary, Canada in June at the World Petroleum Congress pointing out how global ecological damage is linked to continuing car use & fuel abuse.

SIMON JONES

On 1st September, 70 demonstrators including the family of Simon Jones killed in an 'industrial accident' on his first day at Shoreham Docks in Sussex, marched to the Crown Prosecution Service demanding that the company, Euromin, be brought to Court. Each year around 283 workers are killed at work. One friend of was arrested during the demo when the police forced the protest on to the pavement. www.simonjones.org.uk

DUDLEY MORE

600 mostly women NHS workers in Dudley, West Midlands, stepped up strike action on 3rd Sept. with a week long stoppage, against plans to transfer their jobs to a private firm Summit Healthcare under Labour's Private Finance Initiative [PFI]

CODE RED

300,000 workers in 18 Russian cities from the Baltic to the Pacific protested on 17th May against a new Labour Code removing workers' rights and enforcing a 56 hour working week!

BROKEN PROMISES

School pupils in Aberdeenshire coastal villages continue to resist the imposition of charges for bussing to Banff Academy. When the MacDuff school closed 30 years ago free bussing was promised to defuse protests.

IF IT WASNAE FOR THE WIMMIN

11 women at Forframe, Huntingdon, near Cambridge, have stood out for a decent wage rise against their boss Mr Perl. The workers picketed Boots where their frames sell for 130 times what they are paid for each picture frame & enlisted the demo support of ex-miners outside Perl's mansion.

MAN OF STRAW

A demonstration against a 5 mile exclusion zone against a traditional gypsy horse fair was held on 9th Sept.. The traditional fair held for more than 400 years at Horsmonden in Kent has been banned by Home Secretary, Jack Straw, using the Criminal Justice Act to prevent people gathering on the common. [see Schnews 8-9-00] **Meanwhile an unofficial gypsy site in Plymouth has been relocated after being invaded by sheriff officers and the land, including trees, uprooted on the instructions of the National Trust!**

BREAKING BORDERS

Polish anarchists violated border regulations and held a demonstration at the Lutowiski crossing with Ukraine & Slovakia in July. An international camp was organised.

NO BORDERS from page one

to stop the deportations are continuing.

In August, rioting asylum seekers in Australia burned down buildings and tore down fences at the remote detention centre Woomera. Days earlier demonstrations were held in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne against the camps. In June, 700 refugees escaped out of 3 camps to the town centres to protest against their geographical and political isolation.

A Nigerian refugee who raised concern about conditions at Glasgow's YMCA was quickly transferred. Within weeks, Eniola Adewale's asylum application was turned down. A campaign to support him has been stepped up. Contact Edinburgh address below.

In Edinburgh, a march to defend refugees and for equality and diversity took place 24 June. National Days of Action (29 July in England / Wales, 12 Aug in Scotland) were held against the Voucher System. Now it's refugees who get stigmatising food vouchers instead of cash, tomorrow it could be claimants! The Government has announced the system will at least be reviewed - actions are paying off: they need to be stepped up to ensure the abolition of the vouchers and the payment of full benefits to refugees.

Refugees Welcome Here, c/o Peace and Justice Centre, St. John's, Princes St, Edinburgh EH2 4BJ www.refugeecampaign.fsnet.co.uk

National Coalition of Anti Deportation Campaigns, 110 Hampstead Rd, Birmingham B20 2QS 0121 - 554 6947 www.ncadc.demon.co.uk/

CAGE, c/o PO Box 68, Oxford OX3 1RH 07931401962

CARF, BM Box 8784, London WC1 3XX (anti racist, anti fascist mag)

TALES OF RESISTANCE

Workers of McJobs Unite!

Mc DONALDS has come to be as closely associated with low pay and poor working conditions as it has with hamburgers. If 'Big Mac' has entered our language then so have terms such as 'McJobs' and 'McDonaldization'.

For McDonalds employees, the problems endemic to the job are exaggerated by the company's idiotic rules and imbecilic propaganda. So it's no surprise that many of us informally resist the company in whatever way we can.

McDonalds Workers' Resistance (MWR) has been formed by a group of McDonalds workers who want to take resistance to the company a stage further. We believe that if we can only realise our collective power then there is nothing we can't win, and we think we can do this best without leaders or hierarchies but by working at a local level to begin to control our working lives.

MWR has no membership or office bearers and because of the companies obsession with stamping out all who oppose it, we can't be open about our involvement with the group. This has not stopped us from scoring small but encouraging victories, for example, some of us finally received unpaid bonuses, some of which dated back years.

Our methods involve sabotage and disobedience with 'working to rule' being especially effective, but we also encourage employees to know and enforce those few rights which they do have.

Another aim is to counter McDonalds indoctrinating propaganda and as part of this we've produced a workers' paper called McSues (McNews being the company's rag). Although MWR was originally concentrated at one store in Glasgow, we've made contact with like minded employees, working locally and in England, and hope that McSues will act as a catalyst, encouraging more employees to take the step from hating the company, to fighting it.

We see our struggle against McDonalds as being about more than winning ourselves a slightly higher wage (important though such victories are). Rather, we see direct action which aims to give us some control over our working conditions as an integral part of the long process of collectively regaining sovereignty over our lives.

McDonalds is the epitome of triumphalist capitalism, arrogant and contemptuous of those who oppose it. It may soon be surprised - the workers united are more possible than they can powerfully imagine!

MWR will soon have a PO Box, details from CI, also see www.mcspotlight.org

Ya Basta from Italy in action in Prague

- McDonalds workers in France are organising in the anarcho syndicalist CNT. CNT-AIT Section McDonalds, 33 Rue Des Vignoles - 75020 Paris. Tel 00 33 1 43720954.
- On 13 August anti McDonalds protesters in Bristol unfurled a banner on the roof of the store and cooked free veggieburgers for passers-by.
- Hinchley Wood residents in Surrey claimed victory over McDonalds after the multinational sold back a lease bought from the local pub. A squatters camp lasting 552 days persuaded McDonalds that replacing the local pub with their nasty burgers was not popular.

PRAGUE from page 1

translation rights, water and food, systematically deprived of sleep, kept isolated in the dark for days, handcuffed so they bled, handcuffed standing for hours, sexually and racially insulted, harassed and assaulted, beaten continuously (e.g. for over 30 minutes), flung in the boot of a van, strip-searched, made witness to violence against others and one woman's spine was broken after she 'fell' from a first floor window.

The convergence centre was shut on 27 september and people were scattered about the city. 20 stood in a busy tourist square and blew whistles with signs hung around their necks saying "arrest me". Gradually they attracted a crowd of 200 and moved on gathering to be 1,500 in order to blockade the interior ministry for the immediate release of all prisoners.

On 25 September 40 Czech neonazis had marched under heavy police protection 'against the IMF and the left'. Some of them were later given access to police cells in order to hurt and intimidate prisoners. We need to clarify our differences to right wing antiglobalizers. In the words of Peoples Global Action "We reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings."

See www.ainfos.ca/ & http://uk.indymedia.org • Prague prisoner solidarity still desperately needed - 0208 292 2094. Cheques to Prague Prisoner Support via Reclaim the Streets, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY

The Mayday Global Day of Action, Resistance and Carnival against capital was marked by major actions world-wide. http://www.indymedia.org.uk/newsite/

GET INVOLVED !

• **Global Action Scotland,** POB 3811, Glasgow, G42 8ZU globalactionscotland@egroups.com Tel 07932 543074 • **Clydeside anarchist circle** write CI[ac] c/o Transmission 28 King St., G1 5QP • **Autonomous Centre/Edin.Claimants/Womens Info Collective** c/o 17 W. Montgomery Pl., Edinburgh EH7 5HA 0131-557-6242 Open tues 12-4pm (with Edin Claimants) & sun 2-6pm www.autonomous.org.uk

For regular news • **Earth First! Action Update,** POB 1TA, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE99 1TA. 0797 4791841 <actionupdate@gn.apc.org> •**Resistance** - write AF, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 2XL (Anarchist Fed. 07946 214590 www.afed.org.uk) • **SchNEWS,** PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 2DX 01273-685913 www.schnews.org.uk/ • **5th May group** POB 2474, London, N8 (Turkish/Kurdish @'s) • **56a Infoshop,** 56 Crampton St., London SE17 • **Anarchist Trade Union Network,** BOX EMAB, 88 Abbey Street, Derby, DE22 3SQ. Grrp7763aol.com • **Black Flag,** BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX (@ mag) • **Class War,** PO Box 467, London E8 3QX • **Direct Action,** PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW (Solidarity Fed mag) (also **Education Worker Network** address) • **Federation Anarchiste,** 145 Rue Amelot, 75011 Paris, France •**Haringey Solidarity Group,**Box 2474, London N8. 020 8374 5027 hsg@clara.net •**Industrial Workers of the World,** 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB •**Kate Sharpley Library,** BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX •**Kommunist Kranti,** Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India •**Lancaster Anarchist Group,** c/o The Basement, 78A Penny Street, Lancaster •**London Greenpeace,** 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 •**Movement Against the Monarchy,** POB 14672, London E9 5UQ •**NUM Advice Centre** www.minersadvice.co.uk •**Reclaim the Streets,** PO Box 9656, London N4 4 JY, 020 7281 4621 • **S.Herts Sol.Fed** PO Box 493, St. Albans, AL1 5TW • **Umanita Nova,** C.so Palermo 46, 10152, Torino, Italy (@ weekly) **Distros:**• **Active** BM Active, London WCIN 3XX •**AK** PO Box 12766, Edinburgh EH8 9YE *Write for listing.* **Thanks to Anarchist Graphics, Box 5, 167 Fawcett Rd, Southsea, Hants PO4**

• **THE AGITATOR** pamphlet - excellent source for addresses of groups and centres in Britain, Ireland and round the world - £1 + 30p p&p from Haringey Solidarity Group PO Box 2474, London N8.

COUNTER INFORMATION is produced by an independent collective, based in central Scotland, including Glasgow. We aim to assist in the struggle against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. Write for copies to distribute. Send us news. Contact us if you'd like to get involved. Donations needed - cheques to Counter Information.

NEW ADDRESS : Counter Information c/o 17 W. Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA

0131 557 6242(ask for CI) www.autonomous.org.uk CI 55 went to press 5-10-00.

T/SOR 14/9/1/6

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BUT WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?

Debate on just what kind of society we are battling to create - feedback welcome!

A CLASSLESS society where people run things co-operatively, without bosses? A nice idea, but how could it happen?

Argentina today shows how a revolution could start. Neighbourhood assemblies, workers' occupations, the piqueteros unemployed movement creating semi-liberated zones..... This could be the beginning of "ordinary people" - instead of businessmen and politicians - taking all the important decisions in society.

Neighbourhood assemblies in Buenos Aires are organising vital services like child care. Assemblies are linking up with workers in struggle. Workers are taking over and running their workplaces. Piqueteros are operating hundreds of self-managed projects and challenging state power in some areas.

Different grass-roots movements are coming together in struggle and in the Piquetero National Assemblies, where questions of revolution, taking power and the end of exploitation are discussed.

On 3 Feb. the "Centario" neighbourhood co-ordination affirmed that the people should govern through the popular assemblies.

Most such movements are either crushed, or fizzle out. But while revolution cannot be created merely by proclaiming its necessity, in certain situations the fire of revolt can catch hold and spread, involving ever more people in ever more areas.

If workers and residents come together to jointly decide what work needs done, who is to do it, and how - and if this happens in enough places involving enough people - then the old power of the employers and the state could be challenged. This situation of "dual power" could culminate in the new power of peoples' own self-organisation wresting control away from the ruling class.

Of course the ruling class won't give up power peacefully. People will need to seize and defend all society's resources - workplaces, land, transport etc.. ALL must take power, not new "left-wing" rulers. Revolution can't succeed in one country alone - but Argentina today is an inspiration for people everywhere to take action themselves.

UP AGAINST THE WALL Captured police are held at machete point by peasants from San Salvador Atenco defying state plans to build Mexico City's new airport on their land (Chinconcuac, 25 April). On 1 Aug. President Fox announced the withdrawal of the compulsory purchase orders and the abandoning of the airport plans for Atenco. If confirmed this will be a great victory for community solidarity and direct action. A long struggle culminated in July with a virtual insurrection in Atenco and 3 other towns, with the peasants capturing and holding prisoner 19 government officials.

THEY ALL MUST GO!

ECONOMIC CRISIS and government austerity measures have plunged many in Argentina into desperate poverty. 30% are unemployed.

The International Monetary Fund are demanding draconian cuts and sackings to repay £132 billion debt.

But from Dec. 2001 through to today, mass resistance rocks the system. A successful anti government mobilisation saw people blockading main roads country-wide on 26/27 June, despite 2 demonstrators being shot dead.

Neighbourhood assemblies have mushroomed. In Buenos Aires 200 open local assemblies meet weekly, and also send 2 mandated delegates to a weekly coordinating assembly.

Assemblies organise many activities - demos, solidarity with workers, neighbourhood banks, a first aid clinic, community vegetable gardens, news-sheets, street parties, skilled workers reconnecting electricity, gas and water to people cut off for non-payment, a successful struggle to win a subsidised nursery /canteen and jobs for local unemployed. Committees work on areas like health. "Here, no one is in charge, we are going to take turns," said an assembly member.

The unemployed workers movement, the piqueteros, blockade motorways to demand - and often win - jobs, food, education, and health care. Over 60% are women. Centred around neighbourhoods, all decisions are made at assemblies.

The piqueteros have created quasi-liberated zones - in General Mosconi, they run 300+ projects, eg bakeries, organic gardens, clinics, and water purification.

Workers are striking and occupying workplaces, eg the Perfil and Turbio mines. The Zanón ceramics factory in Neuque has been operating under workers control for 6 months. *Cacerolazos*, where demonstrators bang pots and pans, attacks on banks and the looting of supermarkets, are widespread.

"They all must go" - all politicians, multinationals, the banks, the IMF - announced 1000 delegates at the 2nd National Piqueteros' Assembly of Unemployed and Employed Workers on 22/23 June. They declared for an active general strike to open the road to a new popular rebellion, so that the people and workers will govern.

www.argentina.indymedia.org
Que Se Vayan Todos: Argentina's Popular Rebellion : pamphlet from artactivism@gn.apc.org

WORLD TO WIN

REVOLT!

SOCIAL revolt is also erupting in S.American states like Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, with many land occupations, and Bolivia where the social movement in Cochabamba is fighting to abolish parliament and create a popular assembly.

SAVE BAKKARI

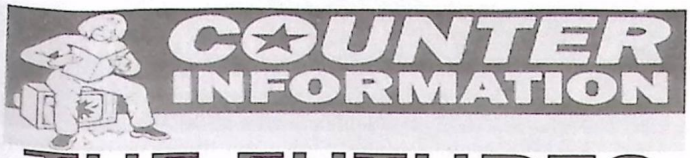
BAKKARI Adoui fled to Scotland in 1998 in fear of his life in Tanzania. Now the Home Office are trying to deport him back there. Bakkari faces a hearing in Glasgow on 19 September. Solidarity is needed urgently. Petitions and info from Bakkari Adoui Campaign c/o TUCRC, 26 Albany St., Edinburgh EH1 www.bakkari-adoui.fsnet.co.uk

McRESISTING

ON October 16th 2002, a small proportion of the 1.5 million people employed by McDonalds around the world will take our first tentative steps towards a better world. Hundreds of McDonalds workers, concentrated in the UK, but also across continental Europe, Russia, North America and Australasia, will take direct action against our employers. Not necessarily strikes, but definitely sabotage, go-slows, partial walk outs, 'phone in sick days', etc. It will be the first ever co-ordinated, international, worker led mobilisation by the McDs workforce. October 16th was chosen because since the mid 1980s it has been World anti-McDonalds day.
Info: http://mwr.org.uk/action.htm

WILDCAT!

2,000 postal workers took unofficial strike action in Glasgow on 14/15 August. The dispute, starting in the Springburn sorting centre and spreading to 8 delivery offices, concerned the compulsory redeployment of workers.



THE FUTURE?

THE COUNTER INFORMATION collective is evaluating the future of the Counter Information news-sheet. Our commitment to people collectively taking control of their own lives and transforming society remains as strong as ever. We are however considering how - and whether - at this time Counter Information news-sheet can play a positive part in this struggle. We invite our readers to participate in this process by sending us your views and by attending the meetings we are organising. We also invite people in broad agreement with us to become involved in producing and distributing Counter Information - this is essential if the news-sheet is to continue.

THE OPTIONS

WHY DO we produce Counter Information?

To show that resistance to exploitation and oppression is occurring now all over the world.

To encourage

- more people to get involved in challenging oppression.
- people to rely not on politicians or leaders, but on self-organisation and direct action.
- people to see resistance as part of daily life, involving the development of positive values such as co-operation and mutual aid
- people involved in different forms of resistance to link up, and see their activity as part of the battle for revolutionary change, to create a world without relationships of domination and submission.

We are now reassessing whether or not publishing Counter Information is an effective way of us doing this.

We have identified 3 possibilities.

1) Counter Information continues as a news-sheet with a Scottish/ British/ International mix of coverage, with distribution throughout Britain and overseas.

However we do not have the resources to come out very regularly and be up to date with news. And in any case other news-sheets and web sites are doing this. Thus rather than concentrating on specific actions and "hard news", we would cover ongoing struggle, how people are organising and go into the arguments about WHY certain struggles are important. For example the Storms Brewing article on climate change in CI 56. We would include personal accounts of daily resistance, which are not necessarily dramatic "news" like a strike or riot.

While still having "shorts", other articles would be fewer, but more in depth. We would aim to make the layout more spacious. We want to be accessible to people new to revolutionary ideas.

2) CI reorientates to a mainly Scotland-based content and distribution, while maintaining some international coverage. This would involve discussing with other Scotland based revolutionaries. The aim would be to have a major distro and significant impact initially at least in the 4 largest Scottish cities.

3) CI stops publication. We would then devote our time and resources to other projects.

There may well be other options. We would really value your feedback and opinion on the future of Counter Information. It will make a difference to what we do.

To continue we need more people actively involved in producing, and distributing Counter Information - without this we will be forced to stop publication. If you want to be involved in any way please let us know.

MEET US!

COUNTER INFORMATION is holding meetings to discuss the future of the news-sheet. These are open to all broadly sympathetic to CI and who are interested in possibly being involved in the project in some way. Details of the meetings in Edinburgh and Glasgow can be obtained by contacting us. There will also be meetings at the Big Blether Gathering at Talamh, Lanarkshire, scheduled for Sunday 8th September, and hopefully at the Anarchist Bookfair in London, on 19 October.

HOW TO GET CI

TO SIGN up to get CI electronically, please visit our website at http://counterinfo.org.uk
In the future we will mail out bulk copies of CI for people to distribute. At present we do not know if we can continue to mail single copies, though we will do all we can to mail CI to prisoners. If it is *impossible* for you to receive CI by email and wish to request an individual copy please write to us.

HOW WE PRODUCE CI

CI is produced in a collective way. This means that meetings are convened, interspersed with e mail communication, to decide on articles, commission them from within the small group of people who make up the collective, and other sympathetic contacts. Articles aren't usually signed, as in a magazine because they are a result, in theory at least, of collective agreement.

We collectively agree how many words we can fit into a folded A3 sheet and plan appropriate word estimates for each of the commissioned articles. We also include at least one column of Shorts. In *World to Win* format this is a snapshot of summarised news which indicates positive efforts throughout the world. Ideally we commission first-hand report articles - which Journalism would term as *Exclusives* ; which convey the vibes of what happened as well as the facts. We have the odd editorial; we simply don't come out with enough regularity to avoid the need for these "sermons" [hopefully not!]. We like to include, as of late, subjective accounts of workplace situations or community struggles, with an element of wit a desirable ingredient.

E mail should allow more participation from outside the Glasgow>Edinburgh corridor, and hopefully cut out non-essential meetings; much as we love each other's fabulous company. Most of us believe ourselves "overstretched"; by commitments and other passions [too numerous/boring to mention: delete as applicable]. It was therefore instructive, especially those without childminding responsibilities, to compare notes with people who come from or have spent time in other cultures, where mere survival is not guaranteed by the smothering façade of Welfarism.

After 17 years, the last one being a "sabbatical", CI needs more participation: to write stories long & short, to translate & assist with mail requests/exchanges. To be of use alongside faq and info web-pages and more frequent news-sheets such as Schnews & Resistance, it needs to rediscover the vitality of people connected to the anti-capitalist movement writing in the first hand, and thinking creatively, to ensure long-term committed and enjoyable participation in a social revolution.

Meeting the CI deadline.....

CONTACT!

***Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh/Edin.Claimants** c/o 17 W. Montgomery Pl., Edinburgh EH7 5HA 0131-557-6242 Open tues 1-4pm (incl.Claimants advice) & sun 2-6pm ace@autonomous.org.uk www.autonomous.org.uk Also c/o ACE : **Edin. Anarchist Workers Group,** and **Women's Group** for women interested in anarcha feminism * **IWW Scotland** see foot p4 * **Glasgow monthly @ discussion forum** last wed of month: info <hereandnowscot@email.com> * **Anarchist Fed.** : AF Alba, PO Box 248, Aberdeen AB25 1JE ***Indymedia Scotland** discussion grp. <imc-scotland-discussion -admin@lists.indymedia.org> ***Faslane Peace Camp** 01436 820901

Regular news : * **Earth First! Action Update/the Loombreaker,** Dept 29, 22a Beswick St, Manchester M4 7HS. 0161 226 6814, efactionupdate@bigfoot.com, www.eco-action.org/efau * **Resistance** - published by Anarchist Federation, c/o 84b Whitechapel High St, London, E1 7QX. 07946 214590 www.afed.org.uk anarchistfederation@bigfoot.com * **SchNEWS**, PO Box 2600, Brighton BN2 0EF 01273-685913 schnews@brighton.co.uk www.schnews.org.uk * **www.ainfos.ca** * **www.indymedia.org.uk**

* **5th May Group**, POB 2474, London, N8 (Turkish/Kurdish @'s) * **56a Infoshop**, 56 Crampton St., London SE17. 56a@safetycat.org, www.safetycat.org/56a Open Thur 2-8pm, Fri 3-7pm * **Black Flag**, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX (@ mag) blackflageds@hushmail.com * **bristle**, box 25, 82 Colston St., Bristol BS1 5BB (mag) * **Class War**, PO Box 467, London E8 3QX * **Direct Action**, PO Box 29, SW PDO, Manchester M15 5HW (Solidarity Fed mag) (also Education & Communication Workers Networks) ***eroding empire**, c/o 56a Infoshop, www.eroding.org.uk (free London rad events listing) ***Haringey Solidarity Group**, Box 2474, London N8, 020 8374 5027 hsg@clara.net ***Industrial Workers of the World**, PO Box 4414, Poole, Dorset BH15 3YL info@iww.org.uk ***Kate Sharpley Library,** BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX * **McDonalds Workers Resistance/ McSues:** write MWR, PO Box 3828, Glasgow G41 1YU <info@mwr.org.uk> http://mwr.org.uk * **Nat.Coalition Anti Deportation Campaigns**, 110 Hampstead Rd., Birmingham B20 2QS 0121 554 6947 * **NUM Advice Centre** www.minersadvice.co.uk ***Reclaim the Streets**, PO Box 9656, London N4 4JY, 020 7281 4621, rts@gn.apc.org, www.reclaimthestreets.net ***S.Herts Sol.Fed** PO Box 493, St.Albans,AL1 5TW *Distros*: * **BM Active**, London WCIN 3XX * **AK** PO Box 12766, Edinburgh EH8 9YE. Space forces us to prune this list, please write for reinstatement/listing. Thanks to Anarchist Graphics.

* **THE AGITATOR** - group addresses world-wide at Haringey Solidarity Group's site http://hsg.cupboard.org

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COUNTER INFORMATION C/O 17 W MONTGOMERY PLACE, EDINBURGH EH7 5HA, SCOTLAND

0131 557 6242 (ask for CI) http://counterinfo.org.uk
ci@counterinfo.org.uk (old e mails with "punk" etc addresses do not work)

The World as we know it

The *Twin Towers* human disaster of 11th September, 2001 has been used by Bush & his minions to herald a crusade against Muslim fundamentalism.

The War mongering xenophobia is likely to be extended from Afghanistan to Iraq. Instead of the linkage with Al Qaeda & the Taliban there is the menacing tone : "need for regime change". If there is any link between Saddam & Bin Laden, and with Noriega and others previously, it is their previous involvement in C.I.A. global politics.

Contingency plans in the U.S.A. have been made to intern anti- Iraq war protestors. If Blair slavishly follows Bush, will muslim activists in the U.K. be interned in a new "Maze"; like the American Japanese were during WW2 ?

ZIONIST ZEAL

The hiatus after the ending of the Cold War was finally over. The media images of excited Palestinian children in Gaza and the West Bank, welcoming the Al Qaeda terrorism was seized upon by Ariel Sharon's Zionist coalition to further escalate the occupation. Successive acts of bulldozing houses and shanty towns, of selective assassination of Palestinian figures of resistance, and denying work opportunities have led to ever more desperate suicide bombings. This "propaganda of the deed" carried out by individuals attached to both muslim fundamentalist and traditional Palestine liberation organisations has led to the indiscriminate death of Israeli citizens in marketplaces and buses.

This cycle suits the political aims of Sharon's Zionist Government. At every opportunity, the acts are linked directly to Yasser Arafat, whilst the infrastructure of the Palestinian authority has been severely weakened by Israeli military action. Instead of Arafat being exposed for the fraudster & demagogue that he is, the Palestinians by and large, understandably rally round him as a reaction to the Bush/Sharon strategy.

One brief encouraging exception was the march in Gaza on 6th July, of workers against the Israeli occupation, their lack of work and the corruption of the Arafat Government. But against the backdrop of reprisal and oppression such voices are marginalised. A similar fate has befallen the anti-militarist forces in Israel, the U.S.A and Western Europe. Some Palestinian spokespersons have urged Hamas and other organisations to desist from the terror tactic of indiscriminate bomb blasts largely targeting working class Israelis. However, the aim of the Sharon's Government is to perpetuate this callous cycle of reprisal & make an alternative to Arafat unlikely in the short term.

THE BUBBLE BURSTS

The exploitation of 9/11 to suit the aims of militarism has involved putting pressure on States such as Yemen to uncover Al-Qaeda forces, a move that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy as resentment against Bush solidifies. The crisis over Kashmir has also become redefined as India identified the insurgency as Al-Qaeda linked, putting pressure on the embattled rulers of Pakistan to distance itself or face military consequences.

The economic fallout from September 11th has been more profound than the political/military adventurism of Bush & his allies. The inflated stock exchange bubble in Wall St. has been well and truly punctured. Furthermore, the ideology of capitalism has been discredited with the successive disclosures of "creative accounting" practices in Enron & other pillars of the profit motive. The mood of insecurity, giving rise to cynicism & anger over the Large Corporations has persisted despite the swamping of dissent by puerile patriotism. Human dramas such as the rescue of American miners on 28th July, become distorted in flag waving illustrations of The Great American Dream.

This "Dream" is a nightmare for the planet we live on with profound environmental changes linked to the values of unbridled consumption & pollution. It is a nightmare for the dispossessed and exploited. Yet desperate reaction based on new illusions suits Globalised capitalism. The world as we know it will not go away without widespread realisation that the agenda of the rulers is redundant.

THE FENCES ARE DOWN!

THE RACIST state clampdown on refugees is meeting resistance world-wide.

Many asylum seekers were and are on hunger strike to fight against the awful conditions in the asylum seekers detention centres and for their denied human rights.

In Bern, Switzerland 300 people managed to free an imprisoned Kurdish refugee under cover of a concert outside the jail.

In Woomera in Australia, at Easter 2002, fences were torn down and about 50 refugees escaped into freedom from the detention centre when protesters initiated a noborder camp and demo to support the isolated, incarcerated refugees, among them kids of all ages. Around 10 refugees evaded recapture.

Two of the escaped refugees, young boys, applied for asylum at the British embassy in Australia. They were handed over to the Australian home office the same day, who put them back into the closed Woomera detention centre. A second mass break-out happened at Woomera in the summer, when protesters tore down the fences with a car.

Many of the refugees are fleeing from wartorn countries such as Iraq and Afghanistan.

This year's international noborder camp in Strasbourg, organised by grassroots groups from all over Europe and beyond, protested against the Schengen-Information System and the European Institutions. Also three camps with different themes took place in Germany, one on gender, one on self-organisation of refugees, and one on repression.

Refugee solidarity tours are happening in Australia, and in autumn in Germany. The self- organisation of "Sans Papiers" - people without documents - is especially strong in France and the Southern European states.

Some churches are protecting refugees from deportations. Gypsies, under threat of deportation set up a protest camp and went on hunger strike in front of the German parliament. Vouchers get exchanged for money, the "Deportation class" campaign set up the first online demonstration. Airlines and other corporations profiting from detention and deportation are targeted. Also anonymous voluntary medical aid is set up for refugees, who are excluded often not only from health, but from any other social services.

No Borders www.no/borders.co.uk

photo - Tearing down the fence at Woomera detention centre

Protesters Stand Up to Polis

On 7 Aug. 2001 Sheriff Officers supported by over 250 Polis were confronted by hundreds of local people when they evicted the occupation of Govanhill Pool, Glasgow [Cl 56].

The Govanhill Pool Campaign has been such a threat to the Cops and the state that activists, some as young as 13yrs old, are being brought to court on trumped up charges. Protesters recently marched on the Police HQ to demand that all charges be dropped. www.saveourpool.co.uk www.mwasafu.f9.co.uk

Residents in Penilee, Glasgow, occupied the Penilee Youth Wing in May /June to resist its closure Now they have formed a local community action group to continue their struggles.

"A SHADOW of death is being raised in the heart of our land, of our mother, of our forest. A cloud of soldiers, paramilitaries, plans and projects is coming once again to threaten us, to rob us of our dream and to evict our indigenous communities.... But we are not going to permit eviction, nor the relocation of our communities, we are going to defend them with everything we have in our hands.." : so declares the Zapatista autonomous municipality of Ricardo Flores Magon, speaking from Montes Azules, deep in the Lacandona jungle, Chiapas.

In the Zapatista village of Nuevo Guadalupe Tepeyac

Communities in Resistance

110 Zapatista villages and settlements are threatened with eviction. The Mexican government cites conservation concerns in the Biosphere Reserve. The real reason is the economic and strategic interests of transnational corporations and the USA and Mexican governments - the Plan Puebla Panama aims to "develop" southern Mexico and Central America, exploiting natural resources like biodiversity and driving peasants off their land into sweatshops. The conflict in Montes Azules is part of the low intensity warfare waged against the Zapatista indigenous people.

AUTONOMY

Throughout eastern Chiapas these indigenous people are developing their own self-managed communities, independent from the state. Following the 1994 Zapatista uprising the people seized large areas of land from big landowners.

Now there are 38 Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities, over 1000 villages and small towns, the cells of the living revolution. In many Zapatista villages no government official or private business can set foot.

The Zapatista communities are under heavy attack. Poverty grows as coffee prices plummet. Fox's pro-business PAN government refuse to ratify the San Andres Accords, which would mean indigenous legal control of their autonomous lands. Instead they passed a phony "indigenous rights" law. The Zapatistas condemn this - all negotiations are off.

Despite police, army and paramilitary harassment and attacks, divide and rule government projects, bribery, arrests, new military/ commercial roads, thousands of refugees..... the Zapatista communities in resistance fight on, defending their community controlled land and maize fields.

Many Zapatista communities have expelled the government teachers, to instead create their own education. Indigenous culture and languages are promoted. Local youths, "education promoters", learn to be teachers.

Health promoters study courses like herbal medicine, then return to their communities to share their knowledge. The idea is to promote life-long good health rather than fill ill people with drugs.

Women have got organised. "Men used to tell women they had no rights. Now we know that we all have rights."

The Zapatista slogan is "mandar obediciendo", to govern by obeying. "Our goal is..to be autonomous of state and federal government. All decisions here are made at the General Assembly where every man and woman over 16 votes."

SEEDS OF RESISTANCE

One Zapatista community is Oventik, where the Mother Seeds in Resistance project was launched on 1st January. Mexico is threatened by genetically modified maize.

"We must save the seeds which grow in our communities because a new type of seed known as transgenetic is arriving and this seed could destroy the plants which our ancestors created over thousands of years," explain education promoters from Oventik's autonomous secondary school. "Students will .. discuss and write about many topics with our oldest and best farmers in our own language, Tzotzil."

The project will collect and store corn seeds, and later beans, squash, chile and medicinal plants. They aim to identify unique seeds grown in hundreds of Maya communities throughout Chiapas.

The Zapatistas are keenly aware that they are part of an international struggle. A worker in a Zapatista autonomous hospital urges people to resist wherever they live : "Any struggle that wins anywhere in the world is like a breath of oxygen for us."

Zapatista solidarity - Chiapaslink, c/o 82 Colston St., Bristol BS1 5BB
http://www.chiapaslink.ukgateway.net
chiapaslink@yahoo.com
*Never Again a World Without Us - T.Ortiz, EPICA 2001 * Black Flag no 221:BM Hurricane, London WC1N 3XX

INSIDE INFO

ZAPATISTAS **As the low intensity war against the Zapatista communities intensifies, the number of Zapatista prisoners has increased from 9 to 24. The prisoners are organised in "The Voice of Cerro Hueco" to continue their struggle for autonomy within prison walls.**
La Voz de Cerro Hueco, Av Diego Duguelay 36c, Barrio El Cerrillo, San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico <bajlum_vozcerrohueco@hotmail.com> Prisoners names etc in "Update 2002" at www.chiapasnews.ukgateway.net

URUGUAY **Prisoners in Uruguay - including anarchist activists - desperately need international solidarity.**
In March hundreds of inmates rebelled against appalling conditions. They took over and largely destroyed Montevideo's inaptly named 'Liberty' jail. Now the authorities are exacting revenge, torturing and beating prisoners - 3 have died, reportedly murdered by guards.
<cruznegra_bsas@yahoo.com.ar> http://www.muchachos.cjb.net
(Info from CNA, apdo.5 de Getafe, 28901 Madrid, Spain)

WORLD TO WIN

REBEL BEAT

HUNDREDS OF poor indigenous people drove the police out the public market area in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico on 7 March. Men, women and children joyfully carted off food, clothes, furniture and more from ransacked big shops. The revolt flared after police arrested street sellers of pirated music. http://www.counterinfo.org.uk/extra/mexicol.htm

TAKING OVER

PEASANT ORGANISATIONS in Guatemala are seizing land. With 2% of the population owning 75% of the farmland, the peasants are taking direct action to obtain the land they need to live.

The peasants and indigenous coordination CONIC reported 19 land occupations underway in early July - and promised more, plus highway blockades, if the government did not act to solve the land problem.

Meanwhile the United Peasants Committee CUC denounced the murder on 25 June of 2 of their members from the community Los Cerritos, Morales, Izabal. They are involved in a fierce struggle over land with estate owner Margarita de Argudo, a US citizen who they denounce for employing paramilitaries and being responsible for the murders.

More international observers are needed to give solidarity to this courageous struggle.
CUC <cuc@guate.net>

WOMEN WIN

2,000 WOMEN were involved in occupying a ChevronTexaco oil terminal in Nigeria for over a week in July. They demanded - and won - jobs in the terminal and the construction of schools, water and electricity systems for their poverty-struck communities.

DON'T MOAN - ORGANISE

THE WOBBLIES are back. The IWW - Industrial Workers of the World - is a union of unions. Militant industrial unions, that is, as opposed to the take-your-dues and run reformist trade unions. And unlike the bureaucrat-run TU's, the IWW is member-controlled from the grassroots up.

Formed in 1905 the IWW has a century long history of organising workers around the globe into hard-fighting no-nonsense unions in both the workplace and the community - the ideal antidote to globalisation. And as faith in trade unionism slumps, the IWW is growing fast. The IWW is the Union for All.
Stuff the boss. Join the Wobblies.
Edinburgh IWW c/o 17 W Montgomery Place EH7 5HA
lobocano2002@yahoo.co.uk
Clydeside IWW
<iwwclydeside@hushmail.com>
www.iwwclydeside.org.uk plus see CONTACT p2.

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A FIGHT FOR ALL

THE PEOPLE in Pollok, Priesthill, Darnley, and Corkerhill have little enough: crap housing and low living standards. But no suffering is great enough to command the guilt of those who profit by the oppressive organisation of our society.

The process of taking from those who have already been robbed continues with the theft of the land given to the people of Glasgow : Pollok Estate.We have so little and still they take; it is not enough to ask them to return it - we need to fight back !

Earth First! in Manchester have been squatting Wimpey cranes (one for 64 hours) in solidarity with Pollok.

Throughout roads campaigns people are taking control over their architecture and their fight for a decent environment. The Anti-M65 and Anti-M77 campaigns have both produced amazing and defiant living quarters. 17 tree houses have been built in Stanworth Valley, Lancs to defy the the M65. Hundreds of kids run free in the Pollok Free State. Pupils at Bellarmine Secondary have formed a Students Union which demands it be recognised and granted the right to leave school to protest. As this has been denied they are on strike and fighting for, in their words, 'our future'.

School students resisting the M77

So goes the cry at Pollok Free State, the anti-roads camp set up in defiance to the M77. The immoral and illegal contract between Strathclyde Region and Wimpey carves up the 1018 acre Pollok Estate, one of Glasgow's few remaining green belt areas. Already trees are being felled and hundreds are attempting to halt the work.

Roads protests in England have been determined, and costly to the profiteering rapists of our earth. Construction companies Norvest Holst (costs rise from £37-51m) Murphy (£4m costs doubled) and Christian & Neilsen (50% over budget) have all lost cash due to direct action protest. The 500 strong anti M11 occupation of Claremont Road, east London took 200 bailiffs, 700 police and 400 security guards a week to destroy at a cost of £2m., in late November.

Anti-roads protesters have used their power in a huge variety of resourceful and imaginative ways.

Two 14-year-olds and two 12 year-olds were arrested in February along with an increasing number of Pollok Free State citizens. The campaign continues with tree-squatting, aerial feats, barricade building, chainsaw interrupting and attempts at persuading the security to change sides. On 25 Feb., after a 3,000 strong illegal anti Criminal Justice Act march, 200 tore down the fence round Wimpey's compound and swarmed over the machinery.

Pollok and the anti-M65 campaigns both desperately need your strength; what is being destroyed can never be fully reclaimed. But we can reclaim our own power. Govern yourself.

Pollok Free State, Barrhead Rd., Glasgow G53. Tel 0860 728244. Glasgow Earth First!, 3 George St., Paisley - 0141 946 2700. No M65 - 01772 704103. No M11-0181 558 2638. EF!Action Update, Dpt.29, 1 Newton St. Manchester

Clause 4? Class war!

LABOUR leader Tony Blair wants rid of Clause 4, which supposedly commits Labour to "common ownership of the means of production".

Blair is making Labour more Tory than the Tories, in a desperate bid for power. So should we defend Clause 4?

We say NO. Every Labour government - all "committed" to Clause 4 - has run the capitalist economy and put profits first. Last time in power (1974-79) Labour held down wages through the Social Contract and savagely cut social services.

What's more for Labour "common ownership" means **nationalisation.** But nationalised industries still operate for profit. They still have a hierarchical structure. They are just another form of capitalism - state capitalism, collective ownership by the ruling class.

Real common ownership means grass-roots workers and community control - no bosses, no managers. It means production for human need - no profit motive, no buying and selling. It means **"from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs".**

DOING IT FOR OURSELVES

Real change will never come through parliament. More people in Britain realise this and are taking direct action against injustice.

Blockades of lorries transporting animals, defying the Criminal Justice Act, stopping motorway building, wildcat strikes. This mass direct action achieves immeasureably more than empty arguments over Labour's constitution. And the experience encourages a much-needed rejection of passivity and consumerism.

Ultimately direct action is the way that humanity can take control of the "means of production", and create a global community with genuine common ownership and real equality and freedom.

GET INVOLVED !

We invite you to write to us, and to the groups listed below. (Write if you want listed)

- **Active Distro**, BM Active, London WCIN 3XX (catalogue 29p stamps & sae)
- **AK Distribution**, 22 Lutton Place, Edinburgh (write for catalogue)
- **Anarchist Black Cross**,c/o 121 Railton Rd.,London SE24 (prisoner solidarity).
- **Anarchist Communist Federation**,84b Whitechapel High St,London E1 7QX
- **Anarchist Womens Newsletter**, POBox 51, c/o Greenleaf,82 Colston St., Bristol
- **Anarchists in London** Fax 071 326 0353 (24 hours) to contact Contraflow, 56a Infoshop, Anarchist Black Cross, 121 Centre, and Bad Attitude.
- **Angry People,** PO Box 183, Waterloo, NSW 2017 Australia.
- **Bad Attitude**, 121 Railton Road, London, SE24 OL, UK. Tel: 071-978 9057
- **The Centre**,c/o Peace & Justice, St.Johns, Princes St., Edinburgh(mail only)
- **Class War** : PO Box 1021, Edinburgh EH8 9PW : PO Box 772, Bristol BS99 1EL PO Box 4297, Dublin 1, IRELAND (groups Britain-wide & international):
- **Contraflow,** 56a Infoshop, 56 Crampton St., London SE17 (excellent news-sheet)
- **DS4A,** Box 8, 82 Colston St., Bristol (mail order distribution)
- **Industrial Workers of the World**, 75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester LE1 1WB
- **Kate Sharpley Library**, BM Hurricane, London WC1 3XX.(also publishers)
- **Kaos?**, c/o J.Bals, Blekksoppgrenda 39, 1352 Kolsas, Norway.
- **Kommunist Kranti**, Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad-121001, India.
- **London Greenpeace**, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1
- **Norwich Solidarity Centre/Solidarity Fed.**: PO Box 73, Norwich NR3 1QD
- **PO Box 51465**, Raedene, 2124, Johannesburg, South Africa.(anarchist distro)
- **Scottish Federation of Anarchists** (£1 for magazine & sae for news-sheet): write for contacts: Box 1008, Glasgow G42 8AA.
- **Sheffield Anarchist Group**, PO Box 446, Sheffield S1 1NY
- **255 PdG Info Shop** : write M. Decortes, c/o Libreria Utopia, via Moscova 52, 20121 Milano, Italy. Tel/fax 02-29003324. (write for catalogue)
- **Tottenham Solidarity Network**, c/o 72 West Green Rd., London N15
- **Wind Chill Factor,** PO Box 81961, Chicago, IL 60681, USA.

NEW ADDRESS : COUNTER INFORMATION, C/O TRANSMISSION, 28 KING ST., GLASGOW G1 5QP (mail only)

COUNTER INFORMATION is produced by an independent collective, based in central Scotland, incl. Edinburgh. Our aim for the past 10 years has been to assist in the struggle against all injustice, oppression and exploitation. We invite you to - send us articles and info - subscribe to Counter Info and take bundles of CI to distribute - make a much-needed donation (Stamps welcome. Cheques/P.O.'s to Counter Information. Write for a standing order form.) Please write if you are interested in becoming involved in the CI collective. We can provide addresses of anti authoritarian revolutionary groups and movements to resist injustice (eg anti racist and community solidarity groups) in most areas of Britain and many overseas areas. Collected BACK ISSUES in Folder, £6 from *Glasgow* address. For info on CI distribution and revol-

Sorting out the Management

"All out Now!", was the rallying cry of postal workers during a wildcat strike. Within a day, 15,000 North-West and West London Royal Mail workers had brought the capital's deliveries to a grinding halt.

Fed up with increased workload and the undermining of health & safety due to new *"computer assisted"* management directives, a 3 day strike involving 650 occurred exploded on 19th Jan when 150 posties were suspended. Unofficial action broke out, with management hurriedly withdrawing disciplinary action against two Glasgow workers to avoid countrywide escalation.

The mood of defiance was matched by the chant -"We've got you now..." ,but in stepped the union to defuse the action. They got the suspensions lifted but ignored the 'speed up' practices that have caused the unrest. Then the courts slapped a fine of £7,500 + legal costs of £100,000 on to the postal workers